

THE
CANON

OF THE

New Testament

VINDICATED;

In Answer to the

Objections of J. T. in his
AMYNTO R.

By John Richardson B. D. formerly Fellow
of Emmanuel College in Cambridge.

The Second Edition Corrected with several Additions.

To which is now added a Letter from the Learn-
ed Mr. Dodwell, concerning the said J. T.

*Nulla est omnino ratio, cur de ea Traditione dubi-
temus, quæ nobis Novi Testamenti Canonem
transmisit. Hen. Dodwelli Dissertat. I. in
Irenæum. Sect. 36.*

L O N D O N:

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To the HONOURABLE
SUSANNA NOEL,

Relict of the Honourable *Baptist Noel,*

And Mother of the
RIGHT HONOURABLE

The Earl of *Gainsborough.*

Madam.

After I had determin'd to let the following discourse go abroad into the World, I never deliberated about the choice of a Patron, nor spent any time in considering to whom it should be Dedicated. What I have there Wrote, belongs to your Ladyship upon *divers* Accounts, *and especially upon these*, that it was drawn up at first in obedience to your Commands, (for, under that notion I do and ought to receive the least Intimations of your Pleasure) was *originally* design'd *only* for your Service, and has already been admitted in Manuscript to the honour of a place in your Closet, for several Mouths. I hope therefore, Madam, you'll not be displeas'd, if I present you the same again from the Press, *a little enlarg'd.* For it's
A 2 obvious

Epistle Dedicatory.

obvious to apprehend, that these Papers, being now expos'd to the View of the Publick, may easily fall into the hands of *many* Readers, who have not that *Candour of Temper*, that *Clearness of Thought*, that *Quickness of Parts* and *Apprehension*, which every one admires in your Ladyship, and therefore it was advisable, that I should make what convenient Provision I could, by a few Alterations and Additions, against Cavilling and misunderstanding. And if, notwithstanding all the care I have taken, the Work still fall under Censure (and strange indeed it must be, if it does not with some,) the severest Criticks, I doubt not, will however be so Just, as to acknowledge that the *Design*, which is all your Ladyship is concern'd in, is good, and fit for a *Person of Honour and Integrity* to own; since it aim's at the vindicating the most Venerable Records of our Religion from the Objections, that are urg'd against their being Genuine. And whatever faults or defects there may be in the conduct thereof, for want of due Learning or Judgment in the undertaker, I don't in the least desire your Ladyship should justify or defend, but leave them all to be charg'd on the account of,

Madam,

*Your Ladyships most humble
and obliged Servant*

J. Richardson.

T H E

T H E

P R E F A C E.

W*hen I first drew up the Reflections upon Amyntor, that are here presented to the Reader, (which was done above half a year ago, though some Alterations and Additions, have been made since) they were design'd only for the Closet of the Honourable Lady, to whom they are Dedicated: For whose ease, the Quotations and References too, when the matter would bear it, were made in English. These I have continued in the same Language still, partly because I suppose it will make them of more general use, and partly because I think, that though the Discourse be now Publish'd, yet the chief Right to it remains still in the first Proprietor.*

Aug. 1699

The Reader may perhaps enquire, why these Papers come out so late, and (it may be too) why they come out at all, since another has already Wrote upon the same Argument. To the First I reply, that they were not originally intended for the Press, and therefore it is no wonder if it prov'd so long before they got thither. To the Second, all I have to say, is, That what I have here Written being seen by some Friends, for whom I have a great deference, they judg'd that it would have its use too, as well as the other Piece before-mention'd.

The Preface.

(a) St.
August. of
the Trinity
2. 1. c. 3.

To whose Judgment I submitted, calling to mind that known Passage of a Learned Father, — (a) Every thing that is Written, does not fall into the hands of all Persons. Perhaps some may meet with my Books, who may hear nothing of others, which have treated better of the same Subject. It is useful therefore that the same Questions should be handled by several Persons, after a different Method, though according to the Principles of the same Faith, that so the Explication of Difficulties and the Arguments for the Truth, may come to the knowledge of every one, either one way or other.

And here I should have taken my leave of the Reader for the present, and dismiss'd him to the Perusal of the following Treatise (if he be so dispos'd) but that I think my self oblig'd to take notice of two or three Passages in the History of the Works of the Learned, for the Month of May 1699, which contradict some Particulars that I have asserted in the following Treatise. They are in the Account of the Ecclesiastical History of Mr. Basnage, but to whom they are to be ascrib'd, I cannot affirm.

Perhaps they may proceed from that Author, and perhaps they may be the mistakes of those who transmitted the account of his Work from Holland to our English Publishers. I charge them therefore directly upon no body, but finding them in the Book above-mention'd, shall give my Reasons why I look upon them as Erroneous.

I begin with p. 283, where we are told in the 2d. Paragraph, how Mr. B. demonstrates that for three Ages after Christ, there was no certain Canon; when both Private Persons, and also Whole Churches, partly admitted Suppo-
sitious

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fititious Books for Sacred, and partly despis'd the Genuine as Prophane. *How far this assertion is design'd to extend, and what Mr. B. has done to confirm it, is no other ways Evident to me at present, then by the Argument, which is immediately subjoyn'd, to satisfy us of the Strength of the Demonstration. This is intended to affect the Whole Bible, but I think a much lower Word then Demonstration might have serv'd the turn, unless there be stronger Reasons in reserve. For it, follows, — † So Origen believ'd that Hermas his Pastor was a Book Divinely inspir'd. On the contrary Theodorus of Mopsuestia calls the Book of Job a Fable borrowed from Paganism; the Books of Chronicles and Esdras a vain Rhapsody; the Song of Solomon a Love Song, &c.*

We have here two Arguments alledg'd; one to prove there was no certain Canon of the New Testament, and the other to evince as much for the Old. And yet it is Evident at first sight, that neither of these Instances give us the least information of the Judgment of Whole Churches, unless Origen and Theodorus can be prov'd to speak in the Names of more People then themselves; which I am confident can never be made out.

† How far the Ancients had any differences about the Canon of the New Testament, I have explain'd in its due place, my business here is to prove that *Hermas* was never esteem'd part of it, or Canonical. And also to examine the Testimony of *Theodorus* concerning some Books of the Old.

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Origen I am sure delivers his own Opinion only, and yet never design'd to advance Hermas into the Number of Canonical Books, as I have observ'd in the following Discourse, in Answer to the Second Objection (p. 25, 26, and 29, 30.) This I think I have there sufficiently shown, but shall however add a Testimony or two more to the same purpose.

(b)F. 103.
Lat. Edit.
Par. 1522.

Thus then he speaks, in his Eighth Homily on Numbers — (b) That one day of Sin is recompenc'd with a years Punishment we Read not only in this Book, wherein there is nothing whose Truth can be in the least doubted ; but the same things also are taught in the Book of the Pastor, if any one think good to admit the Testimony of that Scripture. By which Words it is Evident, that Origen puts a great difference between the Pastor of Hermas and the Book of Numbers, which was one of the Christian, as well as Jewish Canon. In this, he affirms every thing deliver'd, as undoubtedly true ; but plainly intimates, he did not judge so of the former ; by distinguishing it from, and placing it in opposition to, this, and leaving it to the Readers Discretion, whether he'll be concluded by the Authority of it, or no. He calls it indeed Scripture, but that was a Title frequently given to any Books, whose Subject was Religious ; of which I have produc'd several Instances in the following Treatise, and shall only add here, that the Author of whom we are now speaking, even, Origen, in the Preface to his Books of Principles, (c) calls the Doctrine of Peter, twice by that Name, in the compass of a few Lines, though he there expressly tells us, That it was neither Wrote by St. Peter, nor by any other Inspir'd Person.

(c)F. 112.

Again

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Again, we Read in his Fourteenth Homily on Genesis, — (d) *Isaac* therefore dug Wells and (d) *F. 21.* the Followers of *Isaac* dug too. The Followers of *Isaac* are *Matthew, Mark, Luke, John.* The Followers of *Isaac* are *Peter, James, and Jude.* The Apostle *Paul* is a Follower of *Isaac.* For all these dig the Wells of the New Testament. — Here we have all the Writers of the New Testament reckon'd up, but not a Word of *Hermas* and his Pastor.

From these two Passages, and those, which I have alledg'd in the following Discourse, it is apparent, that * *Origen* is every where consistent with himself in this matter, and always rejects the Book of *Hermas* from being a part of the Canon. It is probable, he might have done the same too in his Explanations on the Epistle to the Romans; from whence the present Objection is fetch'd, and have told us in what Sense he judg'd this Piece to have been Divinely Inspir'd, if the Translator

* Perhaps it may be urged, that these Passages are taken out of those Works of *Origen*, which are extant only in *Latine*; I grant it, but then add, that so is the Objection too, and certainly a Translation ought to be admitted for an Answer, when it is alledged for an Objection. For according to our *English* Proverb, Every Man ought to Buy and Sell by the same Measure. But I Reply, (2dly.) That I have shewn in the following Discourse (p. 29, 30.) that *Origen* speaks after the same manner, in those Works of his which are still extant in the *Greek*. And therefore we have a great deal of Reason, to suppose that the Translators have altered nothing in their Versions, as to this matter, since what is found in them is consonant to those Pieces of his, which are preserved in the same Language, wherein they were first Written.

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(e) See the Preface to the Translation f.

132.

(f) See Answer to the 2d. Objection p.

29.

(g) l. 4. against Celsus p.

181. l. 6. p. 276.

of that Work, had not contracted it so far, (e) as to leave out above half of what was Publish'd by Origen. Perhaps we might have there Read, that he thought Hermas to have been no otherwise inspir'd, then his Master (f) Clemens and (g) himself judg'd the Heathen Philosophers to have been, when they taught things agreeable to the Truth and Sound Doctrine; which both these Fathers thought were manifested and discover'd to them by God. And so perhaps Origen judg'd this Book of Hermas inspir'd, because he look'd upon it as containing useful Truths, and suppos'd nothing of that nature, could be Wrote without the Divine Assistance. But be that as it will, and let him mean by it what he can, it is Evident he never admitted it into the Canon, nor esteem'd it of Equal Authority with the Books of the New Testament.

I proceed now to the Second Part of the Argument, in the Passage above alledg'd, which is urg'd against some Books of the Old Testament, and is in these Words, — On the contrary, Theodorus of Mopsuestia calls the Book of Job, a Fable borrowed from Paganism; the Books of Chronicles and Esdras, a vain Rhapsody; the Song of Solomon a Love Song, &c. This is produc'd to show the Church had no certain Canon of the Old Testament for three Hundred years, but with what Ground or Reason will quickly appear.

I must confess this does not properly belong to the Province I have undertaken at present, which is only to justify the Canon of the New Testament. But because such as are little vers'd in Controversies of this Nature, may possibly be stumbled at these Expressions, and perhaps think them unanswerable, if I say nothing to them when they ly thus directly in my way, I hope I shall be excus'd if I spend

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Spend a few lines in laying open the Weakness of this Objection.

First then, that the Jews had a certain Canon, which comprehended all the Books that we reckon as parts of the Old Testament, and no more, is evident and notorious. These, as we learn from (h) Josephus, and (i) Eusebius, who transcribes his Testimony, they reduc'd, in their way of computation, to the Number of Twenty Two. After what manner they reckon'd them up, (k) does not belong to my present business to set down; but only to remark, that their Canon was receiv'd by our Saviour and his Apostles. For certainly our Blessed Lord recommended the Books of the Jewish Canon and none others, when he exhorted his Hearers (l) to Search the Scriptures. He argued too, we may be sure from them, when he expounded to the two Disciples, (m) in all the Scriptures, the things concerning himself. These were the Scriptures, which the Bereans are so highly commended (n) for searching, and of them without doubt St. Paul spoke, when he tells Timothy, (o) that he had from a Child known the Scriptures which were able to make him wise unto Salvation. And again, when he adds, (p) All Scripture is given by Inspiration of God, &c. These Passages, and several others of the same Nature, must be understood of those Books which pass'd for Authentick among the Jews, they can be understood of no other; except the Apostle be suppos'd to comprehend besides some of the earliest Pieces of the New Testament under the Title of All Scripture, which I shall not dispute in this place. And therefore, since the Jewish Canon was admitted as such by our Lord himself, and his Disciples, 'tis manifest

(h) l. 1.
against
Apion. p.
1035, 1036
(i) l. 3. c.
10.
(k) See it
done by
Origen in
Eusebius
l. 6. c. 25.
(l) John
5. 39.
(m) Luke
24. 27.
(n) Acts
17. 11.
(o) 2 Tim.
3. 15.
(p) v. 16.

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manifest the Christian Church was not at liberty to reject what Books of the Old Testament they pleas'd, but were oblig'd by no less then Infallible Authority, to esteem all for Divine, which the

[p] *Rom. Jews (p) to whom the Oracles of God had been*
 3. 2. *committed, embrac'd under that notion. And*

[q] *Euseb. accordingly we find (q) Melito, Bishop of Sardis,*
Ecl. Hist. in the Second, and (r) Origen in the beginning
 L. 4. c. 26. *of the Third Century, collecting the Names of*

[r] *ibid. those Books, which had been receiv'd in the Jewish*
 L. 6. c. 25. *Church, and Publishing the same to the Christians,*
as those which ought to be own'd and acknowledg'd
by them too for Canonical. It's true indeed, the
Book of the Lesser Prophets is omitted in the
account which Eusebius gives us from Origen ;
but that was certainly a mistake of the Transcriber ;
as is apparent (besides several other Evi-
dences) from hence that Origen in his Treatise
 [s] *against Celsus, (s.) joyns the Twelve Minor Pro-*
 1. 7. p. *phets to the others, and tells the Philosopher*
 339. *that he had Wrote Explanations upon some of*
them.

This is, I think, sufficient to prove that the Church had a Certain Canon of the Old Testament, during the first 300 Years; whatever Opinion Theodorus of Mopsuestia might entertain concerning some Particular Books. Those very Books were undoubtedly part of the Jewish Code ; they were reckon'd up as such by the Fathers now mention'd, and the whole Canon of the Jews asserted vnd attested, not only by them, but also by our Saviour and the Writers of the New Testament.

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(2.) It seems not a little Extravagant to bring Theodorus of Mopsuestia as a Witness for the Doctrine of the first 300 years in the case now before us, since, if his Testimony proves any thing, it must necessarily reach a great way farther. For, as Dr. Cave observes in his *Historia Literaria*, He was made Bishop of Mopsuestia in the Year 392, and Govern'd that Church for 36 Years, not Dying before the Year 428. So that if his Authority be look'd upon as sufficient to declare the Judgment of the Catholick Church in his days, it must prove that the Canon of the Old Testament was not settled for above 400 Years; but that it was Lawfull for any one, during that time, to admit or reject what Books thereof he pleas'd. This, I am sure, is a very odd notion, and will never be admitted by those who know, that, in the Fourth Century, (t) [t] *Festiva*
 Athanasius of Alexandria, (u) Hilary of Poitiers, (x) Cyril of Jerusalem, (y) Epiphanius [u] *Epistle 39.*
 of Cyprus, (z) Gregory of Nazianzum, (a) [u] *Prologue to the*
 Jerome of Palestine, and (b) Rufinus of Aquileia, [x] *Psalm.*
 were of a quite different Opinion. There is not [x] *Ca-*
 one of all these, but was more considerable then [y] *tech. 4.*
 Theodorus, and fitter to give an account of the [y] *Heres.*
 Judgment of the Catholick Church then he; and [z] *76.*
 therefore when all of them joyn in asserting the [z] *Of the*
 Authority of the Books, which he rejected, 'tis [z] *Genuine*
 absurd to pretend that the Opinion, he entertain'd [a] *Books of the*
 must be of more Authority then all theirs put [a] *Scripture.*
 together, and assure us that the Church had then [a] *Pro-*
 no Settled Canon of the Old Testament, when [a] *logue to*
 every one of these teach the direct contrary. These [b] *the Books*
 great Names, I think, are sufficient to oppose to [b] *of Kings.*
 Theodorus [b] *On the*
 [b] *Creed.*

Theodorus

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Theodorus of Mopsuestia, if I had nothing else to say. But I shall proceed further, and alledge, the Council of Laodicea, which met about the Year 360, and own'd all the Books of the Old Testament, that were receiv'd by the Jews, for Canonical. The Decrees of this Council were soon after taken into the Code of the Universal Church, and are, upon that account, an undeniable Testimony of the Opinion of the whole Christian World in this matter; and withall inform us, that the Bishop of Mopsuestia, in slighting the Books above-mention'd, did directly contradict the Judgment and Practice of the Catholick Church.

(3.) This will be still further manifest, if we consider that, for this very thing, among others, he was censur'd and condemn'd by the Fifth General Council. We have none of the Writings of Theodorus now extant; nothing but what is quoted from him and preserv'd by others. Neither can we judge what he believ'd and taught but by these Citations. There are many Passages taken out of his Works in the Fourth Collation of the Fifth Council, at Constantinople, and among others, Six or Seven Passages, wherein it appears, that he allowed neither the Book of Job nor the Canticles, nor perhaps the Proverbs or Ecclesiastes, to be of Divine Authority. But for this, he is in plain terms condemn'd (c) by the Fathers of that Synod; and we are thereby taught, that the Doctrine which he embrac'd in this Particular, was so far from being approv'd, that it was indeed Rejected and Censur'd by the Catholicks. It is therefore a very strange method of arguing, to pre-
tend

[c] Coll. 4.
and 8.

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tend to give an account of the Judgment of the Church, by the Opinions of this Bishop, when yet the Church expressly Condemn'd him for holding and maintaining those very Opinions.

That he call'd the Books of Chronicles and Esdras, a vain Rhapsody, I do not find. If he did, both the Council of Chalcedon, which (d) [d] Can. Establish'd the Decrees of that of Laodicea, and 1. also the Fifth General Council, of which we have been now speaking, by (e) subscribing to the Canons [e] Collat. of the other, plainly condemn what he held as to these Books too. So that if we'll make an estimate of the Doctrine of the Church rather from Three such Eminent Councils as these were, then from the Writings of a Single Bishop, 'tis most certain and evident, that all the Books, which he rejected, were admitted by the whole Body of Catholics both before and after his time, and consequently that the Argument, which endeavours to prove the contrary from his particular Opinion, is of no force and efficacy.

I proceed now to some other Passages, which seem exceptionable, and find (p. 281.) the following Words, — Our Author says the Second Epistle of St. Peter is receiv'd by all Churches at this day, and many of the Fathers cited it as Genuine, forasmuch as Athanasius makes use of it against the Arians, Oration the 2d. If it be Insinuated by these Words, that Athanasius was the first who quoted it for Genuine, I have prov'd that to be a mistake in the following Papers, and if the Reader pleases to consult the Answer I have given to the Fifth Objection, he'll

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be'll easily see, that there were those, who ascrib'd it to St. Peter, long before Athanasius appear'd in the World. And (f) this Father testifies as much himself, who, reckoning this Epistle among the Authentick Books of the New Testament, assures us, that he had the Warrant of the Ancients and first Preachers of Christianity for all the Pieces, which he there puts into his Catalogue.

The Objection from the difference of Style, between this and the first Epistle, Mr. B. answers himself; and therefore I pass on to what follows.

Eusebius (l. 3. c. 3.) Writes that he heard from his Ancestors, that this Epistle was not at first inserted into the Canon, &c. Eusebius says something to this purpose, but, I think, what we here Read, carries the matter a little too far. The Historian indeed tells us, that he had receiv'd by Tradition, or from his Predecessors, that the Second Epistle, ascrib'd to St. Peter, was (or ought to be) no part of the New Testament. But he does not acquaint us of what Antiquity or Extent the Tradition was, much less does he say, as this Translation would induce an unwary Reader to Suppose, that it was everywhere rejected upon its first Appearance; but only, that those Books or Persons, from which he deriv'd his Information, did not acknowledge it.

Immediately

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Immediately after we are told, That in Gregory Nazianzen's time, few of the Orthodox receiv'd it for Divine. *Where we may learn this, I cannot tell: I am sure the Father says no such thing in those Places, where he treats Professedly of the Books of the Scripture. He acknowledges indeed in his Verses to Seleucus, (g) that some* [g] Vol. 2. p. 124. *receiv'd, and some rejected it. But he does not say, that the former were fewer than the latter; neither does he interpose his own Judgment there. Though he does in (h) another Poem, where he expressly reckons Two Epistles of St. Peter among the Genuine Books of the New Testament. It follows, The Syrians have not inserted it in their ancient Version, neither do they Read it at this day, unless privately. What may be the Reason of this, I have ventur'd to guess in the Notes on p. 18. to which I refer the Reader.* [h] p. 93.

We are further told, That the Spaniards persisted in the same Error till the Seventh Century, — and also afterwards (p. 283.) That the Epistle to the Hebrews was not receiv'd as Sacred and Authentick, in the Western Church, till the same time.

What particular Reasons Mr. B. has for these Two Assertions, I cannot judge, because his Epitomizer does not alledge any. But I have this (besides the Testimony of Single Persons) to urge on the contrary side; that the Council of Laodicea acknowledg'd both for Canonical, about the Year 360, which being not long after, taken into the Code of the Universal Church, and also
a farther

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farther Establish'd by the Fourth General Council, in the middle of the Fifth Century, is as clear an Evidence, that the Whole Catholick Church, in all the Provinces thereof, receiv'd both these Epistles for Genuine Parts of the New Testament, as the Sixth of the Thirty Nine Articles sufficiently Testifies what Books the Church of England acknowledges for Authentick at this day.

- (i) p. 282. *And therefore I wonder at what is say'd (i) concerning the Epistle of St. James, that in the Fifth Age it was [first] receiv'd by all as Canonical, because all the Fathers of that Age cite it — and the African Councils inserted it into their Canons. How far it appears now to have been admitted before the Fourth Age, I have shown in the Following Treatise; but that both it and the other Controverted Pieces were generally receiv'd in that Century, I have*
- (k) See the Account of the 2d. Canon, p. 14, &c. *prov'd (k) from several Testimonies, whereof the Council of Laodicea is one; and certainly the Canons thereof, which were every where acknowledg'd, had more Influence upon the general reception of this Epistle, then the Synods of Carthage could have, which were never Submitted to by the Eastern Christians.*

For though the African Fathers had no direct Authority over any but those of their own Country yet perhaps it may be pretended, that the Churches of Italy, and others thereabout, might however suffer themselves to be concluded by their Judgment in the matter now before us; because the Canon, concerning the Books of Scripture was appointed to be sent to them, it was decreed that they should

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should be consulted in the case, and the grounds upon which the Bishops of Carthage proceeded, are therein offer'd to their Consideration. And therefore (to prevent needless disputes) I have restrain'd my assertion to the Eastern Churches; for 'tis certain none of the Particulars above-mention'd had any place among them, and by consequence what was determin'd in Africa, could have no Influence in that Age upon their acknowledging the Epistle of St. James. The African Canons were not receiv'd by them till above 200 Years after, and then they were taken into the Oriental Code, as is observ'd in the following Discourse (together with some Epistles of Athanasius and several other Bishops) upon the Authority (not of the preceding Synods at Carthage, but) of the Sixth General Council, which, approving of the matter they contain'd, confirm'd and establish'd them. Whereas the Canons of Laodicea had been admitted by the Universal Church, Eastern as well as Western, in the very Century, whereof we are now speaking; and from them therefore we may with the most certainty judge what Books were at that time esteem'd parts of the New Testament in all places. Hereunto may be added, that it is apparent from the Canon whereof we are now discoursing (which is the 24th. of the African Code in Justellus, and the 27th. in Balsamon) that neither the Epistles of St. James, nor any other of the Books there reckoned up, began then to be first admitted into those Churches. No, they had been acknowledged long before, and, as the Fathers expressly tell us were received by them from their Predecessors.

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But we are further told (p. 283,) that it was after the Seventh Century, before the Revelation was acknowledg'd by the Eastern Churches — and again, (p. 284.) That the Laodicean Council was the first that struck the Revelation and Book of Judith out of the Sacred Canon. What is to be thought of the Revelation, I have hereafter declar'd (p. 15, &c.) But as to the Book of Judith, I answer, (1.) That the Laodicean Fathers could not strike that out of the Canon of the Primitive Church, because it does not appear that it was ever in; any more then Ecclesiasticus, Tobit, &c. (2.) As to the Story of the Council of Nice's alledging it as Divine (which is here hinted at) I believe it to be all Fable. St. Jerome only tells us that it was reported or say'd so; and notwithstanding that, it is plain by his Preface to the Proverbs, that he look'd upon it as Apocryphal; which he would never have done, if he had really believ'd the Nicene Fathers had taken it into the Canon. Neither, if there had been the least Evidence that they had so done, would the Synod of Laodicea have rejected it. For all the World knows, that the Catholicks had every where so profound a Reverence and Veneration for the Decrees of the First General Council, that it is impossible to suppose a Provincial Synod would, so quickly after, attempt to rescind what they had once Establish'd.

I have now done with the Account of the Ecclesiastical History of Mr. B. and do here again declare to the World, that none of the mistakes, which I have been here examining, ought to be imputed

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puted any farther to him, then the Undertakers
Rotterdam have Transmitted a Faithfull Ac-
count of that Work to their Correspondents at
London. If they have fail'd therein, what Errors
there be, must be lay'd at their door, and not at
that of the Learned Author. I would gladly in-
deed have consulted the Original, but not having
the opportunity of so doing, I thought my self under
a kind of Obligation to take notice of the Passages
above-mention'd, because they might be urg'd as
Objections against some of those Truths, which I
have asserted, and (I hope) prov'd in the follow-
ing Discourse.

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THE
CANON
OF THE
New Testament
VINDICATED.

OUR Author, in the beginning of this Treatise, falls very severely on Mr. Blackall, who had charg'd him, in a Sermon before the House of Commons, with questioning the Authority of some of the Books of the *New Testament*, in his History of the Life of *Milton*. This he says was an uncharitable as well as Groundless Accusation, and brings many Arguments to prove his Innocence as to that matter. I shall not concern my self at present in that controversy, nor examine whether our Author be guilty or not of what is lay'd to his charge. I am

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sure

sure all he Alleges for his own Vindication is a grand Impertinency, and such a Notorious abusing of his Readers, as is not easily to be found in Writers, who are not of his Complexion. It is just as if a Man should Vindicate himself from having ever Rob'd on the High-way, and as soon as he had finish'd his discourse, should fall upon and Spoil the next Traveller he meets. For thus he after a long harangue, wherein he pretends to clear himself from the Aspersions of Mr. *Blackall*, and prove that he never insinuated that any of the Books of the *New Testament* might justly be question'd, proceeds (if I understand English) to assert the same with open Face, and brings several Arguments, which can aim at nothing else but to sink their Authority, and make Men believe there is no sufficient ground for receiving the present Canon. Whether this be his Intention or no, I think will easily appear to any one who shall consider the following Particulars.

(1.) He affirms (*p. 52.*) that several Spurious Pieces have been quoted by the Fathers as of *equal Authority* with those which we receive; even by those Fathers upon whose Testimony the present Canon is Establish'd. From whence it is evident, he would and must infer, that those Spurious and our Canonical Books ought to go together, and either be equally admitted or equally rejected, since they are founded upon the same Testimonies.

(2.) *He looks upon the Epistles of Barnabas, the Pastor of Hermas, the Epistles of Polycarp,*
of

New Testament Vindicated.

of Clemens Bishop of Rome, and Ignatius, to be all Forgeries, (p. 43, 46.) and yet he tells us (p. 44.) that the Ancients pay'd them the highest Respect, and reckon'd the first four of them especially as good as any part of the New Testament. So that the Testimony of the Ancients for the Canon of the New Testament seems to be of no value, since, if we'll believe our Author, they put Forgeries in the same rank with the Books thereof, and esteem'd them of the same Authority.

(3.) He urges (p. 47.) that he can't understand why the Writings of St. Mark and St. Luke should be receiv'd into the Canon, and those of Clemens Bishop of Rome and St. Barnabas be excluded, by those who look upon them as Genuine. Since the two former were not Apostles, but only Companions and Fellow-Labourers with the Apostles, and so were the two latter as well as they.

(4.) We Read (p. 56.) in so many words, that, There is not one single Book of the New Testament, which was not refus'd by some of the Ancients as unjustly Father'd upon the Apostles, and really forg'd by their Adversaries.

(5.) He tells us in the same Page, That the Epistle to the Hebrews, that of St. James, the Second of St. Peter, the Second and Third of St. John, the Epistle of St. Jude, and the Revelation, were a long time plainly doubted by the Ancients. And as if this had not been enough he adds (p. 64.) that they were rejected a long time by all Christians, almost with universal consent.

The Canon of the

(6.) To show that he'll leave no Stone unturn'd to expresse the favourable Opinion he has of the *New Testament*, he brings in *Celsus* a Heathen (p. 60.) as a Witness against the Christians, Who exclaims against the too great Liberty they took (as if they were drunk) of changing the first Writings of the Gospel, three or four or more times, that so they might deny whatever was urg'd against them, as retracted before.

(7.) To *Celsus* in the same Page, he joyns the *Manicheans*, (fitly enough I confess) who shew'd other Scriptures, and deny'd the Genuineness of the whole *New Testament*.

(8.) We are told (p. 64.) that the *Ebionites* or *Nazarens* (who were the oldest Christians) had a different Copy of *St. Matthews Gospel*; the *Marcionites* had a very different one of *St. Luke's*; *St. John's* was attributed to *Cerinthus*; and all the *Epistles* of *St. Paul* were deny'd by some, and a different Copy of them shew'd by others.

(9.) He urges (p. 53, 54.) that *Eusebius* rejects the *Acts*, *Gospel*, *Preaching* and *Revelation* of *Peter* from being Authentick for no other reason, but because no Ancient or Modern Writer (says he) has quoted proofs out of them. But herein *Eusebius* was mistaken, for the contrary appears by the Testimonies mark'd in the Catalogue, which any Body may compare with the Originals. In another place he says that the Gospels of *Peter*, *Thomas*, *Matthias*, and such like, with the *Acts* of *John*, and the other Apostles are Spurious, because no Ecclesiastick Writer, from the Times of the Apostles
down

New Testament Vindicated.

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down to his own, has vouchsaf'd to quote them, which is absolutely false of some of them, as we have already shewn. — Had Eusebius found any of these Pieces cited by the precedent Orthodox Writers, he would have own'd them as Genuine Productions of the Apostles, and admitted them, as we say, into the Canon. But having met no such Citations, he presently concluded there were none, which made him reject those Books. And I say (what I have already demonstrated) that Proofs were quoted out of some of them long before, so that they might still belong to the Canon for all Eusebius.

(10.) He Produces (p. 69, &c.) a long Passage out of Mr. Dodwell, which, (if we'll believe him) Reflects more upon the Canon of the New Testament, as to the certainty and Authority of it, then any thing which had been before excepted against in the Life of Milton.

Now let any one lay all these Passages together, and I fancy he'll be of my mind, and easily believe that our Author's Vindication of himself against Mr. Blackall was impertinent, and such a presuming on the weakness of his Readers, as is not usual ; since he presently after commits that fault (though I doubt he'll not call it so) from which just before he attempted to clear himself, and makes no scruple at all of exposing the Writings of the New Testament, which we believe to be Canonical, as doubtful and uncertain.

The Canon of the

II. I suppose it will not be thought sufficient for me only to have proceeded thus far, and (in our Authors Language, p. 8.) *to have shown the Enemy and given an account of his Forces*, except I endeavour to weaken them too, and thereby hinder them from doing such Execution as they seem to threaten.

But because the Particulars above-alleg'd, are Objections against the general Doctrin of the Church in the matter now before us, I think it will be proper, before I examine them, to lay down the Grounds upon which the *Canon* of the *New Testament* has been fix'd and determin'd. Which I shall do with all the Brevity, the Subject will admit of, as designing to enlarge upon and confirm several Particulars in the sequel of this Discourse, where fit occasion will be offer'd.

The Word *Canon* is Originally *Greek*, and in the Ordinary acceptation signifies a *Rule*, and therefore when made use of in Divinity, we understand by the *Canon* and *Canonical Books*, those Books, which were design'd by God to be the *Rule* of our Faith and Practice.

New Testament Vindicated.

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I shall not discourse any thing now concerning the Books of the *Old Testament*, because they are no part of the present controversy: † But in the *New Testament*, those Books only are accounted *Canonical*, which were *Written*, or however *Authoriz'd*, by the Apostles.

† I think it pertain'd to the Apostles, to approve the Sacred Books — Neither have we any Canonical Book, either of the *Old* or *New Testament*, but those which the Apostles approv'd and deliver'd to the Church. *Melchior Canus in his Common Places*, l. 2. c. 7. p. 43. Edit. Lov. 1569. Octavo.

The Church, like a faithful *Guardian*, hath preserved and conveyed to her *Children*, as Writings received from the Apostles, not only what they Penned themselves, but also those Pieces too, which being Wrote by Persons who were not Apostles, yet were by the Apostles confirmed, Publickly Approved, and recommended to the Church, Arch Bishop of *Spilato*, in his *Christian Common-Wealth*, l. 7. c. 1. s. 15. Edit. Hanov. 1622.

— No other Books properly belonging to the Holy Scriptures, but such as the Apostles of Christ left behind them. Bp. *Cosins Hist. of the Canon of the Old Testament*. Sect. 73. p. 80.

So likewise *Episcopus*, in his *Institutions*, (l. 4. Sect. 1. c. 5.) Remarks that those Books make up the Canon of the *New Testament*, which were either Wrote by the Apostles or with their Approbation. And again in his Treatise of the Rule of Faith, c. 7. — *Whatever was Wrote or Approv'd by the Apostles, was, without Controversy, dictated by the Holy Ghost*. He does not mean in this last place, (as some perhaps may be ready to understand him,) that the very Words were dictated; for then there could have been no diversity of Style in the Sacred Writers: But that, as the Matter and Substance of all Doctrines contain'd in the *New Testament* were deriv'd from Divine Revelation, so even, in relating matters of Fact, all the Holy Pen-men had such a measure of Assistance from Above, as was necessary for them. See his *Institut.* l. 4. Sect. 1. c. 4. p. 232, 233.

For they being the Immediate Disciples of, and Attendants upon our Lord, and being Commission'd by him to instruct the World in the Doctrin which he taught them, were without doubt * infallible, (for else they might have led the World into *unavoidable* Error) and therefore their Teaching, their Writings, their Judgment ought to be receiv'd with all Veneration and Submission.

St. *Paul* is reckon'd justly of the same Authority with the rest, because our Saviour was pleas'd to appear to him from Heaven, reveal his Gospel to him in his own Person, and appoint him an Apostle after an extraordinary manner; for he Receiv'd his Commission not from Men (as himself tells us, *Gal. 1. 1, 12.*) but from Jesus Christ and God the Father.

What the Apostles Wrote, and what they Authoriz'd, can be known no other way, then by the Testimonies of those who liv'd at the same time with them, and the Tradition of those who succeeded them.

* If any Preacher^s or Writers, besides, teach Erroneous or False Doctrin, we may judge of and correct it by consulting the Books of the *New Testament*. But if the *Writers and Authorizers* of them were liable to Errour, we have no possible way of redressing the mistakes into which they might lead us. We may be certain therefore they were infallible in conveying to us the Principles of our Holy Faith, since it appears absolutely necessary that they should be so. And our Blessed Lord himself has given us most ample Assurance thereof, in working so many Miracles by the hands of them and their Immediate Successors, to prove the Divine Authority of the Doctrin, which the Apostles deliver'd in his Name, and of the Books too (as well as Sermons) wherein it was Publish'd to the World by their *Writing or Direction*.

And

And therefore, whenever any Churches receiv'd any Writings, to Instruct them in Religion, from the Apostles, they look'd upon those Writings as *Canonical*, or a *Rule of their Faith and Manners*, in the Particulars whereof they Treated. And whenever any other Churches were assur'd, either by the Testimony of those who knew it themselves, or by certain Tradition, that such and such were Apostolical Writings, they too esteem'd them Canonical, preserv'd them as such themselves, and as such transmitted them to others.

Hence it appears, that the Written *Canon* encreas'd gradually in it self, as the Apostles Wrote new Books, and was likewise gradually spread over the World, as Particular Churches receiv'd those Books from others, with good Testimonies and Evidences of their being the genuine Works of those, under whose Names they were convey'd to them. No wonder then, if some Books were sooner and some later receiv'd as Canonical, by the Universal Body of Christians in all Places, because either the Books themselves, or the Testimonials to prove them Apostolical, might, nay Naturally would, be transmitted to some Churches later than others, as they were Situated nearer to, or remov'd farther from, those Cities or Countrys, where they were first Publish'd, or enjoy'd a greater or less intercourse with them.

But the *General* conveying of a great part of them over the whole Christian Church, seems to have been perform'd in the Beginning of the Second Century, about the time of St. *John's* Death

III.

Death, or immediately after it. For as *Eusebius* tells us, in his *Ecclesiastical History* (l. 3. c. 37.) there were then great numbers of Persons, Disciples of the Apostles, who travell'd over the World, building up Churches where the Apostles had before lay'd the Foundations, and Preaching the Faith of Christ in other Places, which had never heard of it before, carrying along with them the *Copies of the Gospels* to all Countreys whither they Travell'd. And it is very probable, that they took with them some other parts of the New Testament besides, since as we shall immediately see from the Testimonies of *Ireneus* and *Tertullian*, they were own'd and admitted every where soon after.

IV. For the clearing of which, I shall consider what Books were first taken into the *Canon*, by the whole Church, and what afterwards; not omitting also to remark that they had besides, some that were stil'd *Ecclesiastical*; and others *Spurious* and *Suppositious*.

(1.) The Four Gospels, the *Acts* of the *Apostles*, Thirteen Epistles of *St. Paul* (that to the † *Hebrews* being excepted) the first of *St. Peter*, and the first of *St. John*, were all receiv'd over the *Christian World*, in the time of *Eusebius*,

† *Eusebius* seems in l. 3. c. 25. to take the Epistle to the *Hebrews* into the *Canon*, but because he does not expressly name it there, and in the 3d. Ch. of that Book, he tells, that it was question'd by some; I have therefore left it out, as a Book that was not *Universally* taken into the *Canon* at that time.

as appears from his (a) *Ecclesiastical History*. (a) L. 3.
To him I might joyn *Athanasius*, the Council of C. 25.
Laodicea, *Epiphanius*, *Rufinus*, &c. But because
they Wrote a while after, when the whole Canon
of the New Testament began to be settled, their
Testimony will reach the other Books, as well
as these under consideration, and therefore I
shall reserve them for a fitter place. It's true
indeed *Eusebius* and those others did not Publish
their Judgments on this Subject till above 300
Years after Christ, and therefore seem some-
thing of the latest to be Witnesses in a case of
this Nature. But then we ought to observe,
not only that they speak positively what was
the general Judgment of their Days, but that
three of them appeal to the Tradition of the Church,
and the Testimony of the Ancients, who, living
nearer the Age of the Apostles, had better op-
portunities of informing themselves from Au-
thentick Proofs, what were their true and Ge-
nuine Works. It was upon this Testimony of
Primitive and succeeding Writers, that the Catho-
lick Church did, in the time above-mention'd,
admit these Books as Apostolical, and account
them for Canonical Parts of the New Testa-
ment. Many of the Writings, which they con-
sulted, are now Perish'd, but some have been
preserv'd to our days, from which I shall pro-
duce an Instance or two, to shew that the
Church, in the time of *Eusebius*, had real war-
rant from Antiquity, to look upon the Books,
whereof I am now speaking, as Canonical or
Rules of Faith, since they had been esteem'd for
such long before, and were attributed to them,
whose Names they bear, by their Predecessors.
Thus *Tertullian*, who flourish'd at the end of the
Second

Second Century, tells us expressly, in his Discourse of the Prescription of Hereticks, that the
 (b) C. 36. (b) *Law and the Prophets, the Gospels and Apostolick Writing*, were the Books, from whence we are to learn our Faith. And that we may know what he meant by *Gospels and Apostolick Writings* (for about them we are only concern'd at present) he does, as occasion was offer'd, in his several Treatises, appeal to all the Books above mention'd (* excepting only the Epistle to Philemon, out of which, being very short, he had no occasion, I suppose, to produce any Testimonies) as the real Writings of the Apostles, and Persons to whom

* If it be enquir'd what Evidence we have that the Epistle to Philemon (since it's quoted neither by Tertullian nor Freneus) belongs to this first set of Canonical Books. I answer, (1.) That Eusebius, and Gregory Nazianzen both in his *Fambicks to Seleucus*, and his *Poem concerning the genuine Books of the Scripture*, manifestly reckon this Epistle among those parts of the Canon which were never doubted of. (2.) Origen expressly ascribes it to St. Paul, in his Nineteenth Homily on *Jeremy*, (Ed. G. L.) p. 185. (3.) Though Tertullian does not in direct terms tell us that it was accounted one of the Canonical Books in his time, yet he says *that* from whence it necessarily follows. For l. 5. against *Marcion*, c. 21.) he wonders why that Heretick rejected the Epistles to Timothy and Titus, which concern the State of the whole Church, when yet he receiv'd another written to a single Person, as well as these; whereby none can be understood but this to Philemon. Since 'tis well known that Marcion rejected all the Canonical Epistles; and consequently the Second and Third of St. John; which also were not at that time generally embrac'd by the Catholics. And therefore since he and the Catholics agreed in receiving one Epistle to a single Person, it must necessarily be this: For he rejected all the others.

we ascribe them. And *Ireneus* before him, who convers'd, as we learn from himself, with (c) *Polycarp*, and (d) others that had been instructed by the Apostles and immediate Disciples of our Lord, mentions (e) the *Code of the New Testament* as well as of the Old, calls the one as well as the other, the (f) *Oracles of God*, and (g) *Writings dictated by his Word and Spirit*, speaks expressly several times (h) of the *four Gospels*, and quotes the *same Books of the New Testament*, which we observ'd *Tertullian* does, and under the *Names of the same Authors* that he does, even of those by whom we now believe they were written, and blames (i) the Hereticks of those times for rejecting their Authority. They were Hereticks only that rejected them in those early Ages, neither does it appear that so much as one of the *Books* we are now considering, was ever doubted of, or call'd in question by any of the Members of the Catholick Church, after they were once publickly known. This is enough to evince, that *Eusebius*, and the Church in his time, had Testimonies of the Ancients to assure them, that the *Books* above-specifi'd were really the *Writings* of the Disciples and Followers of our Saviour. And besides these

† two

- (c) L. 3.
- C. 3.
- (d) L. 3. C.
- 39.
- (e) l. 1. c.
- 1. p. 19. l.
- 3. c. 12. p.
- 267.
- (f) l. 1. c.
- 1. p. 33.
- (g) l. 2. c.
- 47.
- (h) l. 3. c.
- 1, &c.
- (i) l. 3. c.
- 2.

† two Authors now mention'd, there are others still Extant, as *Clemens of Alexandria*, *Origen* and *Cyprian*, who confirm the same Truth, and many now lost, which they then had in their hands, from whence they drew further Proofs and Evidences in this matter.

(2.) The Epistle to the *Hebrews*, the Second of *St. Peter*, the Second and Third of *St. John*, the Epistle of *St. James* and of *St. Jude*, and the *Revelation*, were at the beginning question'd by some, as *Eusebius* informs us in the Book and Chapter above-alleg'd; but then, as the same Author in the same Places assures us, they were receiv'd and acknowledg'd by many others. The Agreement about these, was not so general and uniform as about the other Books. Some Persons, and Churches perhaps, receiv'd them all, but the whole Body of the Catholicks did not, as being not then fully satisfy'd, everywhere, concerning the Evidence which was produc'd for them. Yet neither were they generally reject'd, as some pretend. For several of them were receiv'd in several Places; as it

† *Freneus* and *Tertullian* ought not to be accounted here as *single Witnesses*; but as those which deliver what was the Judgment of all those Churches, with which they convers'd. See hereafter *Sett. XXXIII.* where particular Places are produc'd out of both of them, in which they quote the several Books under the Names of those Authors, to whom they are now ascrib'd; and 'tis also prov'd, *Sett. XXXIV.* that what they believ'd concerning them, was confirm'd by the Suffrage of the Universal Church, that is, all those parts of it with which they had Correspondence.

would,

would be very easy to prove from *Ireneus*, *Tertullian*, and others of the Fathers yet extant. Of which more by and by when we come to our Author's fifth Objection. But however the case was at first, it is apparent that upon a due Examination of the Testimonies of the Ancients, produc'd on their behalf, these also were, in process of Time, receiv'd into the Canon. For (i) *Athanasius*, in one of his Festival Epistles, Wrote about 20 Years after the History of *Eusebius*, reckons them expressly among the rest. So does also (k) the Council of *Laodicea* *, excepting only the *Revelation*. So does

(i) *Athanasius*. Vol. 2. G.L.p. 39. and Basil. sam. p. 921. (k) *Ibid* p. 850.

* The Council of *Laodicea* (Can. 59.) forbids reading *Psalms of private Composition or Uncanonical Books in the Church*, and commands, that only the Canonical Books of the Old and New Testament should be read there. And then adds (Can. 60.) *These Books of the Old Testament ought to be Read, Genesis, Exodus, &c. And of the New, these, the four Gospels, &c.* Reckoning up all those which we count Canonical, only leaving out the *Revelation*. Now the difficulty is, whether the *Revelation* be left out, as a Book that is not Canonical, in the Judgment of the Council, or as a Canonical Book, which is not fit to be Publickly Read, because not intelligible by the generality. For my part, I must say, that I cannot determine this Question either the one way or the other. For since the Fathers have not expressly declar'd themselves, they might, for ought we can tell, leave it out as a Book which they thought not Canonical; or they might leave it out as a Canonical Book, which could not be rightly understood by Common Hearers. For thus the Church of England does not Read this Book in the Lessons, for that very Reason, but only some small Portions, instead of the Epistles, on some peculiar Festivals. And thus also she Reads no part at all of the *Canticles* upon the same account, and yet has asserted both the one and the other to be part of the Canon, in the Thirty Nine Articles.

(l) *Epiphanius*,

- (l) *Heref.* 76. p. 941. (l) *Epiphanius*, and so also does (m) *Rufinus* towards the end of that Century, and vouches the Authority of the Ancients and the Monuments of his Predecessors for so doing. As *Athanasius* also had done before him.
- (m) *On the Creed* p. 26.
- (n) *Vol. 2. p. 194.* *Nazianzen* (n) indeed in his *Jambicks* to *Seleucus* (which sometimes go under the Name of *Amphilochius*) tells us that the Controverted Books were in his time doubted of by some. But 'tis plain from the Verses, under his own Name, (o) concerning the Genuine Books of Scripture, that he receiv'd them all, the Revelation only excepted. And it appears too by (p) *St. Jerome*, that when he Wrote his Letter to *Dardanus*, several of the Latine Church rejected the Epistle to the Hebrews, and several of the Greek the Revelation. But he declares positively, that he own'd both for Canonical, because most of the Ancients had done so before him. However the Council of *Laodicea* being admitted into the Code of the Universal Church, and afterwards more solemnly ratify'd, among others, in the first Canon of the (q) Fourth General Council, shows plainly that both the Eastern and Western Churches did then receive all the Pieces mention'd above, for Canonical, excepting the Revelation only; and what opinion they had of that, we can't Judge from this Argument, because the *Laodicean* Fathers had said nothing of it in their last Canon. When it was first Universally receiv'd is not very easy to decide. Certain it is from the Sixteenth Canon of the Fourth Council at (r) *Toledo*, that there were very many then, at least in *Spain*, who rejected it. And certain it is from the same Canon, if we may believe the Fathers who compos'd
- (o) *P. 98.*
- (p) *F. 24.*
- (q) *A. C. 450.*
See also
Act. 11.
of that
Council, p.
406.
- (r) *A. C. 633.*

compos'd it, that it had been declar'd formerly part of the New Testament by many Councils and Synodical Decrees. But the Names of those Councils, which had asserted the Divine Authority of this Book, are not there set down; and therefore I must Ingeniously confess that I can't tell what Synods the Fathers had an Eye to therein, besides that of (s) *Carthage*, which reckons the Apocalypse by Name, among the Canonical Books of the New Testament. For as to the Famous Decree of the *Roman* Council under *Gelasius*, || I suppose that was not forg'd till some years after the Fathers at *Toledo* made the Canon which we are now considering. However, it is Evident that many of the most Primitive Fathers acknowledg'd the *Revelation* to be (t) Divine, and Written by St. John the Apostle; it is Evident too from what has been above alledg'd, that *Athanasius*, *Jerome*, and *Rufinus* receiv'd it, and appeal'd to the Ancients as their Warrant for so doing. We have seen likewise that it was own'd by *Epiphanius*, and acknowledg'd as Canonical by a Synod at *Carthage*. It was admitted also for such by (u) St. *Hilary*, (x) St. *Ambrose*, (y) St. *Augustin*, and many others of that and succeeding Ages, also by the Council of *Toledo* above mentioned. But whether the diffusive Body of the Church, was so far satisfy'd of its being Authentick, as to receive it every where for such, till it was Establish'd by the Sanction of the Sixth General (z) Council, I shall not take upon me to determine. However, then the Controversy seems to have been brought to an end, if not before. For the Fathers of that Assembly having receiv'd, not only the Decrees of the Council of

(s) *A. Crit.*
419.

(||) See
Dr. Cave's
Hist. Li-
teraria in
Gelasius.

(t) See
hereafter
Seet. XI.
and XXV.

(u) *Proleg.*
to the
Psalms p.
188.

(x) *L. 3.*
of Virgins
p. 98.

(y) *Of*
Heres. c.

30.
(z) *A. C.*
680.

(a) *Can. 2.* *Carthage*, but also (which is more express in the case) (a) the *Epistle of Athanasius* above-mention'd, did thereby own the *Revelation* to be properly Canonical, and the whole Church of that Age † (especially the Orientals among whom this Book had been most question'd) submitting to their Authority, back'd with so good Evidence, *This, as well as the other controverted Pieces had been*, was afterwards reckon'd as a Genuine part of the New Testament.

† That the *Syrians* Read none of the Controverted Pieces in their Churches, besides the *Epistle to the Hebrews* and that of *St. James*, is Evident from the New Testament, which *Ignatius* Patriarch of *Antioch*, sent to be Printed in *Europe*, the last Century, and was actually Printed by *Widmanstadius* at *Vienna* in the Year 1555. But why they do so, may be a question. It does not seem to be, because they look upon the rest as not Canonical, for they have them too in the *Syriack* Tongue, as we may learn from *Bp. Walton* and *F. Simon*. If I may have leave to interpose my Conjecture, I should think it proceeds from hence, (||) that this Translation is very Ancient, and was Certainly made before the controverted Books were Univerſally receiv'd, and their *Lectionaries* or *Rubricks* adapted to it. And having no other Version made, till many years after, of the rest of the Catholick Epistles and the *Revelation*, they would not alter the old *Lectionaries* (when they had one) as they must have done, if they had taken in the other Pieces. This may be judg'd a fond thing, and so it is; but not half so fond and contrary to common Sense, as what is practis'd by the *Romanists*, these very *Syrians*, and some others of the Eastern Churches. For the Scriptures having been of old Translated into the Languages of Particular Countries, that they might be understood by the Common People as well in the Publick Service as in their Private Reading, they still continue (so Superstitious are they in observing an old Custom) to Read them and Celebrate their *Liturgies* in *Latine* and the *Ancient Tongues* of the Places specified, though they are now grown quite out of use, and the Unlearned understand not one word of them.

(||) See Bp. Walton's Apparatus to the Polyglot Bible, Proleg. 13. S. 15.

That

That these Books were not *every where* admitted upon their *first* appearing, shows that the Church did not proceed rashly and carelessly in the case. And that they were *every where* admitted *afterward*, shows that there was clear Proof and Evidence on their behalf, and therefore they have been ever since joyn'd to the rest of the Books, which we esteem Canonical. The case of those Spurious Pieces, which were thrust into the World under venerable Names, was clear contrary. They flourish'd a little and made a show, when they first came abroad, but after a while, not being able to stand a strict Examination, vanish'd and fell to nothing; so that little has been left of most of them, besides their Names, for many Ages.

(3.) There have been always in the Church, besides these, other Writings that were call'd *Ecclesiastical*. Such under the New Testament, are the Works of the Ancient Fathers, which have ever been look'd upon as useful and of good Authority (though not infallible as the Canonical Scripture is,) being generally compos'd, not only by Pious and Learned Men, but also by those, who liv'd in, or near, the Primitive Ages of Christianity, and consequently had better opportunities of being acquainted with the Doctrin and Practice of the first Preachers thereof, then we have. And among these, *they* have always been esteem'd of the greatest Authority (if their Character was answerable upon other accounts) who flourish'd and wrote nearest the times of the Apostles. Of this sort is (that which is call'd) the first Epistle of *Clemens* to the *Corinthians*, which

C 2

though

though *Eusebius* tells us was of so great Estimation (b) as to be Read Publickly in several Churches, yet he (c) excludes it from the Canon. And so he does the Pastor of (d) *Hermas*, which both he, and (e) *Athanasius* and *Rufinus*, acknowledge to have been Read too, openly in some places, yet they all joyn in raising it no higher then an Ecclesiastical Piece. Which I therefore remark here, because we shall find our Author hereafter making a great stir with these two Treatises.

(b) *Ecclesiastical Hist.* l. 3. c. 16.
(c) *L.* 3. c. 25.
(d) *Ibid.*
(e) *In the places above cited n. 1. of this Section.*

(4.) Several * *Spurious* Writings were also Publish'd very early in the Church, under the Names of the Apostles and other great Men of which our Author has given a large Catalogue. These were for the most part compos'd by (f) *Gnosticks* and other Hereticks to maintain and propagate their False and Wicked Opinions, and some too were the Works of Zealous but Simple Catholics. As for instance, the Travels of *Paul* and *Thecla*, the Author of which, as (g) *Tertullian* and (h) *St. Jerom* inform us, wrote it out of Love to *St. Paul*. He was discover'd in the Life time of *St. John*, and by him Censur'd. Many of these were found out to be Cheats as soon as they

(f) *Fern.* l. 1. c. 17.

(g) *Treatise of Bapt.* c. 17.
(h) *Treat. of Eccles. Writ.* in *Luke*.

* Those Writings, which were Publish'd under false Names, were certainly *Spurious*. But it is not necessary to suppose that all, which the Fathers call'd *Apocryphal*, were of that sort. For the Title of *Apocryphal* is often apply'd to such Ancient Books, as were no part of the Canon; many of which were certainly no Forgeries. See hereafter *sect.* XXIII.

came abroad, and others, not till after some years. However they were generally discover'd sooner or later, so that of the Forgeries of the first Ages, there is little remaining to our Times, except the bare Titles.

Having premis'd thus much, I shall now proceed to consider the Objections of our Author.

V.

I. Then he affirms (p. 52.) that several Spurious Books were quoted by the Fathers, as of equal Authority, with those which we now receive, even by those Fathers, upon whose Testimony the present Canon is Establish'd. From whence, it is Evident, he would and must infer that those Spurious and our Canonical Books ought to go together, and either be equally admitted or be equally rejected, since they are founded upon the same Testimony.

To which I Answer,

(1.) That the quoting other Authors in the same Discourses, wherein we appeal to the Writings of the Sacred Volumes, is no Evidence that we Judge them of the same Authority. For is there any thing more usual in Moral and Theological Treatises, then to Cite the Scriptures and Fathers and Philosophers, and Poets too, sometimes, Promiscuously, as there is Occasion? And yet no Man in his Wits ever thought, that by so doing, these three last were declar'd as infallible as the first. How often have Tully and Seneca and Plato and others of their Rank, been quoted by Christian Writers

in the same Discourses, wherein they have fetch'd Proofs from the Evangelists and Apostles? And yet, I dare say, they never dreamt that, for so doing, they might be charg'd as making *Tully* equal to *St. John*, or *Seneca* to *St. Paul*. We quote Authors, not always as convincing Proofs of the Truth of what we deliver, but sometimes because they express themselves handsomely, argue Pathetically, Reason closely, or to show that others have been of the same Judgment with us, though at the same time we think them no more infallible then we do our selves. And after this manner, (that I may come close to our Authors Objection) did *Origen* proceed, who is observ'd to have cited as many Apocryphal Writings as any almost of the Fathers (though he produces generally, if we'll believe (i) a Learned Man, nothing but what is profitable or useful from them) and yet he does not advance any of them into the Canon, but reserv'd that Honour for those Books to which it did belong.

(i) *Mon-*
sieur Va-
lois's notes
on Euseb.
l. 3. c. 38.

(2.) Though our Author affirms in this Objection, that the Fathers quoted several Spurious Books as of equal Authority with those which we account Canonical, yet he gives us no proof thereof, since the bare Citing both together is, as we have seen, no Evidence. Something indeed he offers at (p. 44.) which sounds like an Argument, and to that perhaps he may here refer, and therefore I have put it in the Second place, that I may allow every thing, he urges, its due force.

II. Therefore,

II. Therefore, He looks upon the *Epistles of Barnabas, the Pastor of Hermas, the Epistles of Clemens Bp. of Rome, Polycarp and Ignatius* to be all *Forgeries* (p. 43. 46. ||) and yet tells us, (p. 44.) that the *Ancients* pay'd them the highest respect, and reckon'd the four first of them especially as good as any part of the *New Testament*. So that the Testimony of the *Ancients* for the Canon of the *New Testament* seems to be of no value, since, if we'll believe our Author, they put *Forgeries* in the same Rank with the Books thereof, and esteem'd them of the same Authority.

(1.) To which I Answer, That the Positive Charge of *Forgeries* seems a little too confident, at this time of day, upon so many Books at a clap; most of which have had a good Reputation for several Ages, and have been of late days justified and defended by the Pens of divers of the first Rank for Learning and Criticism. But our Author has no consideration for that. The Writers of these Pieces were all (if we'll be perswaded by him) *Ignorant* and *Superstitious*, whatever Opinion the World may have formerly entertain'd of the Knowledge and Piety of any of them; and their Assertors, Men of no Judgment and Understanding, who undertook a cause, which can't be defended, For so we Read (p. 38.) *It's the easiest task in*

|| Whether what our Author produces out of *Origen*, (p. 46.) as from *Ignatius*, concerning the *Devils being ignorant of the Virginity of the Virgin Mary*, &c. be design'd as an Objection against the Epistle wherein the Expression is found, or no, I can't tell: If it be, I shall refer him for an Answer to Arch-Bishop *Usher*, in his *Prolegomena* to the Epistles of that Father, c. 12. p. lxxxv. Ox. Edit. 1644. 4to.

the World (next to that of shewing the Ignorance and Superstition of the Writers) to prove all these (and a great many more there reckon'd up) Spurious. But I shall crave leave to say, that talking and doing are very different things, and our Author will find it a more difficult Employment to run down some of these Pieces, then it was to heap together a Catalogue of Writers, where so many Collections had been already made to his hand. Close Reasoning and Arguing are quite of another Nature, and what an excellent Talent he has at *making out Forgeries*, will easily appear to any one who shall take the pains to compare what he says in Answer to the *Vindication of K. Charles the Martyr*, either with the *Book it self*. or the *Reply of his Learned Adversary*.

But however, let that be as it will, I say he extremely wrongs the Ancients in the accusation he here brings against them, when he says, that *they reckon'd the four first of these especially, as good as any part of the New Testament.* For (1. *Eusebius* was certainly as proper a Judge of what the Ancients held, as our Author; and yet he plainly sets the Books we mention'd (p. 10.) above all others, and makes *them only* to be Canonical in the Judgment of the generality of his Predecessors. And though the Church in the days of (k) *Athanasius*, *Epiphanius*, &c. saw Reason to take some more Books into the Canon, then were admitted by *Eusebius*, yet these, we are now considering, were still excluded, as we may easily see in the Catalogues Publish'd by those Authors. As to *Barnabas* and *Hermas*, (l) *Eusebius* expressly reckons both of them among those which were judg'd Apocryphal.

(k) See these Authors in the places above cited Sect. IV. n. 1.
(l) *Ecl. Hist.* l. 3. c. 25.

crystal. (m) *Athanasius* and *Rufinus* sink the matter into the Rank of *Ecclesiastical Writers*, and do not by Name indeed mention the former, but however leaving his Epistle out of the Number of Canonical Writings, and vouching the Ancients for what they do, plainly show they knew nothing of any of these being made equal to the Books of the New Testament. (2.)

(m) In the places above cited.

The Arguments our Author brings to prove

† Our Author fetches a large compass in some of his References here, but however, having formerly made some remarks of this Nature, in Reading these Fathers, I may possibly be able to trace him in the Books he directs us to, on this occasion. I find therefore that *Clemens of Alexandria* (Ed. Par. G. L. 1641.) cites *Barnabas*, *Stromat.* l. 2. p. 373, 375, 396, 410. — l. 5. p. 571, 577, 578. — *Origen* cites him l. 1. against *Celsus* p. 49. — l. 3. of Principles c. 2. f. 144. Edit. Par. 1522. *Frenæus* quotes *Hermas*, l. 4. c. 37 (not c. 3. as 'tis in our Author) p. 370, — *Clemens* quotes him, *Strom.* l. 1. p. 311, 356. — l. 2. p. 360. — l. 4. p. 503. — l. 6. p. 679. — *Origen* quotes him, l. 1. of Principles c. 3. f. 117. — l. 2. c. 1. f. 124. — Comment. on *Hof.* G. L. p. 202. Now how fairly the Sense of these places is represented, will appear from what follows.

He tells us first (p. 44.) that *Clemens of Alexandria* and *Origen* quote the Epistle of *Barnabas*, as Scripture; which is not true (though if it was, it signify'd nothing:) For in the places referr'd to, they cite it indeed, but under no such Title. He says (p. 45.) that the *Pastor of Hermas* is cited as Canonical Scripture, by *Frenæus*, *Clemens of Alexandria* and *Origen*. *Frenæus* indeed and *Origen* calls it Scripture, but not Canonical: That's our Authors addition. But *Clemens* does not so much as call it Scripture, in many of the Places mention'd. What follows concerning the Epistles of *Clemens*, Bishop of Rome, *Polycarp* and *Ignatius*, was needless. We not only grant, but assert that they have been esteem'd by the Ancients, though not as equal to the Books of the New Testament. And I doubt not but they'll continue in the same estimation, notwithstanding the mighty attacks, with which they are threatned by this vain boaster.

the

the Primitive Fathers look'd upon the four Treatises above-mention'd to be as good as any part of the New Testament, are much too weak for that end, for which they are design'd. They are in short these three, (1.) That the Books are either quoted by the Ancients, or (2.) call'd by the Name of Scripture, or (3.) have been Publickly Read in Churches. Now that the bare quoting an Author does not raise him to an equality with the Writers of the Canon, has been already made apparent in Answer to the first Objection. And as to the Title of *Scripture*, though that be commonly attributed to the Books of the Old and New Testament, yet it is sometimes us'd in a more large and Lax Sense for any Religious Writings, both by *Ancients*, and *Moderns*. For thus, it is evident from (n) *Eusebius*, and own'd by (n) *Ecclesiastical History* l. 6. c. 25. *Melchior Canus* and *Sixtus Senensis*, that *Origen* cast all those Books out of the Canon of the Old Testament, which are esteem'd by the Church of *England* for Apocryphal, and yet in his (o) Third Homily on the *Canticles*, he expressly calls the Book of *Wisdom*, *Scripture*; and (p) *F. 124.* so he does the *Maccabees* in his (p) Second Book of Principles and the first Chapter; which (that I may remark that by the way) is the only place of all those nam'd by our Author, where *Origen* gives that Title to the *Pastor of Hermas*, and by joyning it in the same appellation with a Book which he expressly asserted to be *Apocryphal*, plainly declares that he did not intend by ascribing to it the Name of *Scripture*, to advance it into the honour and Authority of the Canon. Neither did *Tertullian* without doubt, when in his Treatise of *Chastity*, (c. 10.)

he

he calls the same Book of *Hermas*, *Scripture*; for he censures and inveighs against it in the same place, and tells us, that it had been condemn'd by more then one Council of the Catholicks. *Rufinus* also in his Exposition on the Apostles Creed, does not scruple the calling even those Treatises, *Scripture*, which are forbidden to be Read in the Publick Assemblies. And St. *Augustine*, in his Work concerning the (q) City of God, tells us there were many Fables contain'd in those *Scriptures*, which are call'd *Apocryphal*. From whence, and from all the other Passages before-mention'd it is Evident that the Title of *Scripture* was apply'd by the Ancients to other Writings as well as to those which they judg'd Canonical. And thus too, though our Church has cast the Books of *Wisdom*, *Tobit* and *Ecclesiasticus* out of the Canon, yet she gives them the Appellation of *Scripture*, in the (r) Book of Homilies, and appoints part of them and other *Apocryphal* Books to be Read in Churches, which is a clear proof that the Ancients, by doing the same thing, did not declare the pieces, which they so Read, to be Canonical or even as good as Canon.

And indeed I cannot but wonder how our Author could be guilty of such a mistake, as to think that the bare Reading of a Book in the Publick Assemblies was an Argument, that it was esteem'd part of the Canon, when not only the Constant Practice of our Church, but also the positive declarations of the Ancients themselves do in expresse words teach us the contrary. For thus *Rufinus* in his Exposition on the Creed, reckons up several Books, which he says were stil'd Ecclesiastical and Read Publick-

(q) L. 15.
c. 23.

(r) 3d.
Serm. a-
gainst the
fear of
Death, p.
65. 3d.
Serm. a-
gainst Ido-
latry p. 57.
2d Serm. of
Almsd. p.
160.

(s) 3^d
Tome of
his Epist.
p. 9.

(t) Eccl.
Hist. l. 3. c.
16.
(u) L. 3.
c. 25.

See also
for Her-
ms, above,
p. 20.

ly by the Ancients in the Church, but not admitted as of sufficient Authority to Establish or confirm Articles of Faith. The same is also affirm'd by St. Jerom, in his (s) Preface to the *Proverbs*, where he tells those to whom he directs it, that the Church Read indeed the Books of *Judith* and *Tobit* and the *Maccabees*, but yet did not look upon them as Canonical; and so (adds he) let her Read *Ecclesiasticus* and the Book of *Wisdom* for the Edification of the People, but not for the proving of any Doctrines or Ecclesiastical Opinions. And thus much too we may gather from *Eusebius*, who (t) relates that the first Epistle of *Clemens*, Bishop of Rome, was Read in most Churches, and yet (u) he plainly excludes it from being any part of the Canon of the New Testament. All which are evident demonstrations, that it has been an usual Custom, not only of the Church of England, but also of Antiquity too, to have such Books Read in Churches for the Instruction of the Hearers in Moral Duties, as were never esteem'd by them to be parts of, or equal to, the Canonical Scripture.

What has been say'd, I suppose is sufficient to show that none of our Authors Arguments answer what he design'd, or prove that those Fathers whom he quotes, look'd upon the Books above-mention'd to be as good as any part of the New Testament. And therefore I shall desire him, when he publishes his History of the Canon, not to produce either *them*, or *any other*, as esteem'd Canonical in the Judgment of Antiquity, only because they were cited by the Fathers, or call'd Scripture, or Read in the Church. For none of these Particulars prove it, as we have now made Evident. But

VII.

But it may be urg'd, that though none of the places expressly set down by our Author, do sufficiently make out that, for which they are produc'd; yet however there is a passage of *Origen* in reserve which will do the Business. And that is in his Explanation of the Epistle to the *Romans*, (c. 16. v. 15.) where he tells us, that the Pastor of *Hermas* is an useful Book, and, as he thinks, divinely Inspir'd. He does say so indeed in that place, but then he does not tell us what sort of Inspiration he means. There have been different degrees of it in the Opinion of all Men, especially of the Ancients. For thus *Clemens* of *Alexandria* (who was *Origen's* Instructor) promises to Write (x) as *God should inspire him*. And he informs us too, that the Philosophers, who wrote Truth, did it by the (y) *Inspiration of God*: and yet I dare say never dreamt that either his own Writings or theirs ought for that Reason, to be taken into the Canon. And we know, the *Divine Plato*, is a common Expression. But I answer more directly, (1.) That if *Origen* did look upon this Book as of Divine Authority, the Church in his time was not of the same Opinion. For himself (z) tells us, that there were those who slighted and rejected it, and upon that account he questions whether he may venture to draw a Testimony from it; and (a) *Tertullian* assures us that it had been censur'd by every Council of the Catholics. (2.) I think it is plain, that, *Origen*, whatever Character he may have occasionally given of this Book, did not judge it any part of the Canon, because in the beginning of the *Philocalia*, and particularly (c. 6.) we find

(x) *Strom.*
1.4.p.475.

(y) *Adm.*
to the
Gentiles,
p. 46, 47.

(z) *Comment. on*
St. Mat. p.
361. *Philocal.*
c. 1. p. 9.

(a) *Of Chastity*
c. 10.

find him several times distinguishing the Books of the New Testament into the Writings of the *Evangelists* and *Apostles*. Now 'tis certain that the Pastor of *Hermas* can be reduc'd to neither of these heads, and therefore in the Judgment of *Origen* * was not Canonical. If it be ask'd to which of these two Classes we assign the Acts of the Apostles, I answer to that of the Evangelists, as being the Work of one of them; and that *Origen* intended so to do, and have it reckon'd among the Books that were part of the Canon, is apparent from hence, that he Wrote *Homilies* thereon, which neither he nor any of the Fathers did upon *Barnabas*, *Hermas*, *Clemens* or any other of the *Ecclesiastical* or *Apocryphal* Pieces under the *New Testament*. But we need not use any Argument in the case. *Origen* himself expressly ascribes the *Acts of the Apostles* to St. *Luke* more then once, and reckons them by Name among the other Books of the *New Testament*, in his Seventh *Homily* on *Joshua* (f. 156.) where none of the *Apocryphal*, none of the *Ecclesiastical* Books are joyn'd with them.

However it may not be amiss to add upon this occasion, that if a single Father, or two, have had a higher Opinion of a Book then it did deserve, or a wrong Opinion of the Author, this will not overthrow the Argument, upon which the Divine Authority of the Books of the *New*

* If we look into the *Philocalia* (c. 1. p. 9.) we may there observe that *Origen* does not speak of the Pastor of *Hermas* with the same Honour and Respect, that he does or the genuine parts of the Canon.

Testament is built. We look upon them as Divine and strictly binding to Obedience, because they were either wrote or confirm'd by the Apostles of our Saviour, and we believe that they were so wrote or confirm'd by them, not upon the Testimonies of one or two Fathers only, but of the whole Primitive Church, who were capable of Judging in this question. Our Author prevaricates, if he'd perswade us, that the Ancients form'd their Judgment in this matter, only upon the Tradition of one or two Persons, or even of those few Treatises of the Ancient Writers, which are now Extant. These indeed they appeal to, and that justly, but besides these, there were great Numbers more in being in those days which (*b*) as well as the several Churches which were the depositaries of the several Epistles and Gospels) they consulted, and were from thence enabled to determine whether this or that Book was Genuine or no. If any one doubt this, I shall send him, as our Author does Mr. *Blackall*, to Dr. *Cave*, *Du Pin*, &c. where he may learn, that all the Works of some, and many Treatises of others, of the most Ancient Fathers, are now perish'd, which yet were every where to be had in the days of *Eusebius*, *Athanasius*, *Epiphanius* and *Rufinus* and their Predecessors and by the assistance of which they and the Church in their times, judg'd the several Books of the *New Testament* to have been indeed wrote by those Persons, to whom we ascribe them.

(*b*) See
Tertul. of
Prescript.
c. 36.

From

VIII.

From hence it may appear, how trifling and impertinent the Raillery is, which our Author (*p. 57.*) flings upon the Council of *Laodicea*. They were indeed the first Publick Assembly, that we know of, which Establish'd, by a Solemn Decree, the *Canon* of the *Old* and *New Testament*, such as the Church of *England* now Embraces (excepting only the *Revelation*) about the Year 360. This they were enabled to do, whatever our Author pretends to the contrary, by the Testimony of their Predecessors. There was no need of a Particular Revelation, no need of Oral Tradition neither, at that time, as he would Insinuate. There were numerous Books abroad in the Church, some of which are now lost and some we still have. By the help of them they were Instructed how to form a right Judgment, how to distinguish what was Genuine from what was Spurious; *most of this latter sort also having been already discover'd and reject'd to their hands as is apparent from Eusebius.* Though our Author seems to have forgot that, when he was Reflecting upon this Venerable Assembly.

IX.

III. He urges (*p. 47.*) that he can't understand, why the Writings of *St. Mark* and *St. Luke* should be receiv'd into the *Canon*, and those of *St. Clemens* Bishop of *Rome* and *St. Barnabas* excluded, by those who look upon them as Genuine. Since the two former were not *Apostles*, but only Companions and Fellow-Labourers with the *Apostles*, and so were the two latter as well as they.

In Answer to this, I shall tell our Author, that if he had Read those Books he pretends to quote, he might have found a reply to this Objection before he made it. For in the beginning of that Dissertation of Mr. *Dodwell*, from whence he cites so long a Passage, that Learned Man would have inform'd him (*Sect. 5.*) that the compilers of our Canon design'd only to take in the Writings of the Apostles, whose Authority was unquestionable, and that they took in the Gospels of St. *Mark* and St. *Luke*, (a) not barely upon their own account, but upon that of St. *Peter* and St. *Paul*, whose Companions and Fellow-labourers they were, and * who

(a) See also above p. 7. in the Notes.

* The Attestation of a Person, of whose Prophetick Spirit there was no question, was one way of being certify'd concerning the Divine Mission of a Prophet among the *Jews*. According to that Maxim of the Masters, *A Prophet of whom some other undoubted Prophet Witnesseth that he is a Prophet, is assuredly a Prophet.* See Dr. *Spencer of Vulgar Prophecies*, c. 4. This seems to have been exactly the case of St. *Mark* and St. *Luke*. Their Writings were Authoriz'd and their Inspiration thereby attested by the Apostles, who were undoubtedly inspir'd, and therefore we may safely conclude, that these two Evangelists were inspir'd likewise, i. e. directed by the Spirit of God, in selecting what was proper for them to Write, and preserv'd by the same from falling into Errour. For no higher degree of Inspiration then this, seems to have been necessary in the present case. There was no need of immediate Revelation to inform them of those things, which they either knew of themselves, or receiv'd (as St. *Luke* tells us he did) from Authentick Witnesses. However we may be sure they were under the actual conduct of the Divine Spirit, who guided them in the choice of such particulars, as were fit for each of them to relate, and kept them from inserting any thing that was Impertinent, False or Erroneous. Thus much we are bound, and thus much we have warrant, to believe concerning them, since what they Wrote was Authoriz'd, and recommended to the Church, by the Apostles.

D

attested

(b) *Institut*
l. 4. Sect.
1. c. 2.

attested their Inspiration and Fidelity in what they Wrote To the same purpose also speaks (b) *Episcopus*, There seems no Reason at all to doubt but that the Gospels of St. Mark and St. Luke were approv'd by the Apostles, and upon that account admitted into the Catalogue of Authentick Writings. And what is thus asserted, may be easily prov'd from the Testimonies of the Fathers.

(c) *Eccl.*
Hist. 1, 2.
c. 15.

For thus, *Tertullian* in his Fourth Book against *Marcion* (c. 5.) tells us, The Gospel, which Mark Publish'd, is affirm'd to be Peter's, and that which was drawn up by Luke, is ascrib'd to Paul. And we learn from (c) *Eusebius*, that both *Papias* and *Clemens* of *Alexandria* attested, that the Romans having prevail'd with St. Mark to Write his Gospel, what he had done was reveal'd to St. Peter by the Holy Ghost, who thereupon Authoriz'd the Work, and appointed it to be Read Publickly in the Church. And the same

(d) *l. 6.*
c. 25.

(d) Historian informs us from *Origen*, that St. Paul approv'd and recommended the Gospel of St. Luke, being drawn up principally for the use

(†) *Catal.*
of Eccl.
Writ. in
Luke.

(||) *Rom.*
2. 16.

(*) *2. Tim.*
2. 8.

of the Gentiles. And we learn from (†) St. *Jerome*, that many believ'd he referr'd to that, whenever he spoke (||) of his own Gospel. And the same Author relates (*) before, that the Gospel according to St. Mark was say'd to be St. Peter's; that is, as I suppose, Wrote by his Instruction and order'd to be Publish'd with his Approbation. To which may be added what the afore-mention'd Historian, I mean *Eusebius*, tells us in (e) another Place, that the three other Gospels being brought to St. *John*, he Read them over and Perus'd them carefully, and when he had so done, justified what they had wrote, and confirm'd the Truth thereof with his own

(e) *l. 3.*
c. 24.

Testi-

Testimony. Though, for Reasons there set down, he thought fit to make another Relation of his own, and add thereto such Particulars as had been omitted by the others.

As for the Acts of the Apostles, they (as Mr. Dodwell observes, *Sect.* 39.) were probably wrote by St. Luke at the same time with the Gospel or History of our Saviour, and therefore fall under the same Consideration. They were the Second Volum, Part, or Treatise of the same Book, (as appears from *Acts* 1. 1.) and therefore though St. Luke's Name was not put to them, yet it was never doubted in the Church, who was the Author. His Name was prefix'd to, learnt from, and preserv'd in, the first part, the Gospel: from which the *Acts* seem afterwards to have been separated, (though at first they went together) for the convenience of the Readers, that so the Gospels all making up one Book by themselves, (as was usual formerly under the Name of the Book of the Gospels,) might be the more easily compar'd together. Now this makes a great difference between the Writings of these two Evangelists and those of St. Clemens and St. Barnabas, though suppos'd Genuine. These latter were never recommended or attested by any of the Apostles, and therefore could never expect that Reception and Authority in the World, which the others found, nor to have the same place in the Canon.

IV. We Read (p. 56.) in so many words, that there is not one single Book of the New Testament, which was not refus'd by some of the Ancients, as unjustly Father'd upon the Apostles, and really forg'd by their Adversaries. To which I answer,

D 2

That

X.

That either our Author Equivocates, in this Place, or asserts that which he can never prove to be true. For, as I shew'd above, (p. 10, &c.) the four Gospels, the Acts, thirteen Epistles of St. Paul, the first of St. Peter, and the first of St. John were all along admitted by the Catholick Church; and never, that appears, after a sufficient Promulgation, oppos'd by any who held her Communion. The Hereticks indeed rejected, some one, some other parts of the New Testament, but to understand *them only*, by the Word, *Ancients*, exclusively of the Catholics, was certainly design'd to impose upon the unwary Reader, and can never be excus'd from foul dealing, since that Expression is commonly taken in another Sense.

But perhaps it may be here ask'd why the Testimony of Hereticks, in a matter of Fact, should not be as good as that of Catholics, and why they may not be admitted as Witnesses of what Books were or ought to be esteem'd Canonical, as well as others.

To this I answer, (1.) That the Catholics gave clear and evident proof of the Truth of what they asserted, when the Hereticks could give none that was of any value. For as we learn from (f) *Ireneus*, (g) *Tertullian* and others, All the Churches, which had been planted by the Apostles, and those who held Communion with them, were on their side. These all agreed in the Books, these all agreed in the same Gospels and Epistles, which they affirm'd, they had receiv'd in a certain succession from the first Age. The Tradition was every where the same, as to the Books mention'd (p. 10.) and might well be esteem'd undoubted, since they were

(f) l. 4. c. 63.

(g) l. 4. against Marcion.

c. 4. Of Prescripti-
on c. 36.

See these
places in-
stead on
after

XIV.

were no further remov'd from the Disciples of our Saviour in the days of *Jreneus*, then we are now from our Grandfathers. The Bishops and Churches of his time convey'd the *Canon* by Written, as well as Oral Testimony, to the next Ages, and so enabled them to run down the Forgeries of Hereticks, as they had done before them; who could not give that Proof and Evidence for their Supposititious, which the Catholicks did for their True and Genuine Writings. They could not deduce them from the Apostles, since (h) the Founders of the several Sects, the Authors of these Heresies, Forgeries and Corruptions (as *Valentinus*, *Basilides*, *Apelles*, *Marcion*, &c.) were much latter then they. And when Application was made to the most Ancient Churches in the World, which the immediate Disciples of our Lord had taught in their own Persons, or to those which joyn'd in Communion with them, they all gave in their Testimonies both against the Books and Doctrin. And this brings me to a Second Argument. (2.) (i) The Books which the Hereticks forg'd, contradicted that Doctrin which the Apostles had taught in the Churches they planted. This was sufficiently known in those Ages (which were at so little a distance from our Saviour) by the general Tradition of all the Churches in the World. And therefore those * Books were justly concluded Au-

* *Eusebius* (l. 3. c. 25.) tells us that several Books Publish'd under the Venerable Names of St. Peter, St. Thomas, St. Matthias, &c. were and ought to be rejected as Spurious, for this Reason (among others) that they contain'd Doctrins contrary to those which had been Taught and Publish'd by the Apostles; whence it was Evident that they were the Forgeries and Contrivances of Wicked Men.

(h) *Jreneus* l. 3. c. 4.
l. 5. c. 20.
Tertul. of Prescript.
c. 29, 30.
Clem. Alex Strom. l. 7.
p. 764.
(i) *Jren. l.*
l. c. 17.
compar'd
with l. 3.
c. 2, &c.
Tertul. of Prescript.
c. 32, 38.
See also
Euseb. Eccl. Hist.
l. 3. c. 25.
at the end.
See these
places out
of *Jreneus*
and *Tertulian*
insist-
ed on more
fully here-
after. See
XXXIV.

thentick, that (besides good Testimony) agreed with, and those Supposititious, which were repugnant to, the Doctrin of the Apostles. (3.) These Arguments have been judg'd so convincing, that the whole Christian World has given a Verdict on their side. For the Doctrin of most of the Primitive Hereticks has appear'd so Monstrous and Extravagant, the Books which they forg'd to assert it, so ill attested, that the one has now been rejected every where for many hundreds of years, and the other condemn'd and in a manner quite vanish'd. Whereas the *Doctrin of the Catholicks maintain'd it self under the sharpest Persecutions, and their Books were preserv'd † when it was Death to keep them, and so both have been convey'd together to the present time, notwithstanding all opposition.*

XI.

V. Our Author tells us again (p. 56.) *That the Epistle to the Hebrews, that of St. James, the Second of St. Peter, the Second and Third of St. John, the Epistle of St. Jude and the Revelation were a long time plainly doubted by the the Ancients. And, as if that had not been enough, he adds (p. 64.) that they were rejected a long time by all*

† See the *Passion of Felix, Bishop of Tubyza in Africa*, who was put to Death in the year 303, because he would not deliver the Scriptures to be burnt, according to the express Decree of *Dioclesian and Maximian*, the Emperours, to that purpose. Many others also suffer'd on that account, and they, who, for fear of Death, did deliver the Scriptures to the Heathen, were called *Traitores* (whence our *English* word, *Traitors*) and fell under the Churches Censure, as is notoriously evident from the famous case of *Cecilian* and the *Donatists*.

Christians,

Christians, almost with Universal consent. But to this I have spoken already (p. 14, &c.) and therefore think it necessary to add no more, by way of Answer, in this place, then what a Learned Man has say'd concerning the Epistle of St. James, which may with equal Reason be apply'd to all the rest of these once controverted Pieces: *Though the Ancients have been divided as to this point, it is enough that the succeeding Ages after a due Reflection on this matter, have found in Antiquity certain Acts, sufficient to place them in the rank of the Canonical Books of the New Testament, and that all Churches in the World, have, since that, receiv'd them as such.* However before I dismiss this Objection, it will not be improper to take a little notice of our Authors Ingenuity, and consider with what Truth he could affirm, that these Books were rejected for a long time by all Christians, almost with an universal consent. The contrary to which will appear Evident, if we produce those, who own'd them (during the time he says they were so rejected) as the Genuine Writings of the Authors under whose Names they are now Publish'd and Read in the Church of England.

But before I descend to Particulars, I shall Remark in general, what I suppose will be easily granted, That *Athanasius* and *Rufinus* had better opportunities of understanding the Judgment and Practice of their Predecessors, then our Author can have at this distance; and yet these two, (one of them in his Festival Epistle, and the other in his Commentary on the Creed (i) (i) p. 14, above-mention'd) are so far from owning that 15. the Controverted Books were *universally reject-* ed before their Times, that on the contrary, they

they appeal to the *Monuments and Traditions* of preceeding Ages, for the Establishing all of them in the *Canon*; and inform us that they found *so good Warrant*, among those who had liv'd all along before their days, for their being Authentick, as perswaded them too to acknowledge them for such without scruple. Every one indeed had not receiv'd them in the first Centuries, but *so many* had done it and upon such *good grounds*, that these Fathers thought they had sufficient Reason to comply with, and follow their Example. And though, great Numbers of Authors, which they had, being now lost, we cannot give such an exact account of the Judgment of the Earliest Times as they were able to do, yet, I think, we both may and ought to take their Words, in what they affirm upon their own Reading and Information. Especially, since there are many Books still remaining, which strengthen the Testimony they give, and mention (more or fewer of) the Controverted Pieces as the Genuine Writings of those to whom they are ascrib'd. This will appear from what follows.

The Epistle to the Hebrews, own'd as St. Paul's by Clemens of Alexandria in his *Stromata*, (l. 4. p. 514.) — by Origen in his Comment on St. John, (G. L. To. 2. p. 56.) — He affirmed, as we find in the Ecclesiastical

clesiastical History * of Eusebius (l. 6. c. 25.) that *many of the Ancients* believ'd it to be St. Paul's. Eusebius (l. 3. c. 3.) says it was rejected only by *some*, and seems to have admitted it into the Canon with the rest, for his own part, (l. 3. c. 25, and 38.) St. Jerome in his Epistle to Dardanus (f. 24.) says that it was receiv'd by *most of the Ancients*, and quoted by them as *Canonical Scripture*. I don't produce the Testimony of St. Jerome upon his own account, in this place either for this *Epistle* or for the *Revelation*; but only as he informs us what was the belief of *most of the Ancients* in the case before us. (k) The *Ancient Syriack Version* (l) ascribes it to St. Paul.

(k) See before p. 12.

(l) F.

Simons
Critical
History of
the N. Test.
Vol. 2. Part
2. c. 15. p.
140.

* It would have been an easy matter to have produc'd several Passages of most of the Fathers here alleg'd, to prove that they held the respective Books, for which they are quoted, Canonical, or Genuine Writings of those Apostles to whom they are ascrib'd. But I wou'd that as needless; and thought one Testimony sufficient to show the Judgment of one Writer. Otherwise I could have brought more then Twenty Places of Origen (for Example's sake) to show that he held the Epistle to the Hebrews to have been Wrote by St. Paul, four or five from Clemens of Alexandria, &c. I could also have produc'd other Authors, in whom Passages out of these Pieces are made use of, without naming the Books, from which they are borrow'd; but that did not answer my design.

The † *Epistle of St. James*, was own'd as that of Apostles, by *Origen* (in his Eighth Homily on *Exodus*, f. 43.) — *Eusebius* (in his *Ecclesiastical History*, l. 3. c. 25.) says it was approv'd by many. The *Ancient Syriack Version* has this Epistle.

The Second Epistle of *St. Peter*, own'd as his by *Origen* (in his Seventh Homily on *Joshua*, f. 156.) and by *Firmilian* of *Cappadocia* (in his Epistle to *St. Cyprian*, among the Epistles of that Father, Ep. 85. p. 220.) *Eusebius* says the same of this as of the Epistle of *St. James*, and in the same Place.

† Some will have *St. James*, the Author of this Epistle, to be a distinct Person from the two Apostles of that Name. They say that there was a *Third*, the Brother of our Lord, and Bishop of *Jerusalem*, and that he wrote this Epistle. To which I answer (1.) That the Scripture no where mentions any more then two of this Name, and *St. Paul* (*Gal.* 1. 19.) tells us expressly, that *James*, the Brother of our Lord, was an Apostle; and 'tis plain by his Words, that he means one of the Twelve Apostles. (2.) *Clemens* of *Alexandria*; and *Eusebius* from him, (*Ecclesiastical History*, l. 2. c. 1.) reckon no more then two, one *James* the Son of *Zebedee*, and the other *James*, call'd the Just, the Brother of our Lord, who was also Bishop of *Jerusalem*. The same is asserted by *Epiphanius*, (*Heret.* 29. c. 3.) and *St. Jerome* against *Helvidius* (f. 10.) So that since there were but two, call'd by the Name of *James*, and both of them, Apostles, let which of them can, be the Author of the Epistle, it was certainly wrote by an Apostle. Though it is generally concluded to be the *James*, who was our Lord's Brother (probably so still'd either because the Son of *Joseph* by a former Wife, or the Son of the Virgin *Mary's* Sister, as *St. Jerome* will have it;) for the other *James*, the Son of *Zebedee* was kill'd by *Herod* at the first planting of the Church. And therefore to this *James*, *Rufinus* expressly ascribes it in his Exposition of the Apostles Creed, calling him Apostle and Brother of our Lord. See *Dr. Cave's* Life of *St. James* the Less.

The Second Epistle of St. John, own'd as that Apostles by *Ireneus* (l. 1. c. 13. p. 95.) by *Clemens of Alexandria*, who wrote a short Explanation of it, (which see at the end of his Treatise concerning the *Salvation of the Rich.* Ox. Edit. p. 142.) by a Council at *Carthage* (in the year 256, among *St. Cyprians* Tracts p. 242.) *Dionysius of Alexandria* mentions this *Second* and also the *Third* Epistles as commonly ascrib'd to *St. John* the Apostle, in his time, about the year 260 (*Euseb. Eccl. Hist.* l. 7. c. 25.) *Eusebius* says the same of this, as of the Epistle of *St. James*.

The Third Epistle of St. John. (n) *Origen* (n) See also his *Seventh Homily on Joshua* f. 156. allows that both it and the *Second* might be admitted as the Apostles, and plainly acknowledges that many receiv'd both as Genuine, when he says that all did not. (See *Euseb. l. 6. c. 25.*) *Dionysius* says the same of this, that he does of the *Second*; and *Eusebius* the same that he says of *St. James's* Epistle.

*The Epistle of * St. Jude*, own'd as his by *Tertullian* (l. 1. Of the Ornament of Women. c. 3.) by *Clemens of Alexandria* (in his *Pedagogue* l. 3. c. 8. p. 239.) by *Origen* (in his Comment. on *St. Matthew*, G. L. Tom. 11. p. 223.) *Eusebius* says the same of this, that he does of *St. James*.

* That *St. Jude* was an Apostle is evident from the first Verse of his Epistle; for there he styles himself, the Brother of *James*. And that there was a *Jude* or *Judas* (for both are the same in the Original) the Brother of *James*, among the Apostles, appears from *St. Luke* 6. 16. and *Acts* 1. 13. He is call'd *Lebbeus* whose Surname was *Thaddeus* by *St. Matthew* (c. 10. v. 3.) the reason of which see in *Dr. Cave's* History of his Life. The

(o) See
hereafter
Sect. XXV.

The Revelation, ascrib'd to St. John the Apostle, by Justin M. (in his Dialogue with Trypho. p. 308.) by (o) Irenæus (l. 4. c. 37. p. 373.) by Clemens of Alexandria (in his Stromata l. 6. p. 667.) by Origen (in his Commentary on St. Matthew, Tom. 16. p. 417.) by Tertullian (l. 3. against Marcion c. 14. and 23.) By St. Cyprian (in his Treatise of the Benefit of Patience) to John, without any Epithet ; who quotes this Book, I believe, a hundred times. Eusebius tells us (l. 3. c. 25.) that some indeed rejected it, but others reckoned it among the Books that are undoubted. St. Jerome in his Epistle to Dardanus (f. 24.) says that it was receiv'd by most of the Ancients, as Canonical, and that they cited Testimonies from it as such.

From what has been here alledg'd, I suppose it is evident, that there were many, (and among them several very Eminent Writers, *Whose Works are still Extant*, besides other considerable Persons, and Churches too without doubt, unknown indeed by Name now, but well known, as appears, to Eusebius, Athanasius, Rufinus, &c.) who own'd the Authority of the controverted Books, even before they were generally receiv'd by the whole Church. All the Reflection I intend to make upon it, shall be only this, that we may certainly expect a very accurate and impartial *History of the Canon* from our Author, who takes not the least notice of all these Places, but notwithstanding them and others of the same Nature, had yet the confidence to say, that *these seven Pieces were rejected a long time* (even in that time, wherein the Authors

Authors and Witnesses, I have now produc'd, liv'd) by all Christians, almost with Universal Consent. Such as have a mind, may take his word for it, if they please. But, I believe, few, who shall consult the quotations produc'd above, will admire him either for an exact or faithful Historian.

[Since the Printing the first Edition of this Book, I met with *Mr. Du Pins History of the Canon of the New Testament*; and find that (p) (p) c. 4. S. 2. he sincks the date of the *Syriack Version* (the Testimony of which I have produc'd above for the *Epistle to the Hebrews*, and that of *St. James*) much lower then the time I have assign'd it. For he'll not allow it to be more Ancient then the Fifth or Sixth Century. He alledges two Reasons for his Opinion, which I think my self oblig'd here to consider. The first is, that the Doxology is therein added at the end of the Lord's Prayer, (*St. Mat. 6. 13.*) which he supposes (with others among the Learned) not to belong to the Original Text, but to have been inserted long afterwards from the *Rituals*; and consequently to be an Evidence, that the *Syriack Version*, wherein it is found, is more Modern then we pretend.

To which I answer (i.) That it is not so very clear (as some will have it) that the Doxology was not Originally part of the Lord's Prayer. (q) For *F. Simon* himself acknowledges that it is Extant in most of the Greek Copies, and in some Ancient Fathers of the Greek Church: And our Countrey-men *Dr. Lightfoot* and *Mr. Gregory* produce such Reasons to assert its being Genuine, as are not easy to be answer'd. Their Arguments, such as are Curious, may Read in the Authors themselves,

or

(q) *Crit. Hist. of the N. T. Vol. 2. Part 1, c. 32. p. 165. Eng. Edit.*

(r) c. 2.
Sect. 3. p.
36. Eng.
Edit.

(s) Acts 2.
42. 20. 7.

or in the *Synopsis* of the Criticks. I shall not set them down here, because they are not necessary to my present purpose. For (2.) If I should grant that the Doxology was really borrowed from the Liturgies of the Greek Church, yet this will not answer the end, for which it is alledg'd by our Learned Critick. For (r) Mr. *Du Pin* owns the Gospel of St. *Matthew* to have been Translated into Greek from the *Hebrew*, in the Apostles days; and yet the Doxology, as was just now observ'd, is in most Copies of that Translation. Now what way soever it got into the Greek, the very same it might get into the *Syriack Version*, and yet both these *Versions*, for all that, be of Primitive Antiquity, as one of them is own'd to have undoubtedly been. (2.) He urges that where mention is made of breaking of Bread, the word *Eucharist* is put (in this Translation) instead of Bread, which does not savour much of Antiquity. (s) 'Twice I readily grant it is so rendred, but don't see what Prejudice that can bring to our Cause. Mr. *Du Pin* is indeed a little obscure here, but his Objection must be understood in one of the three following Senses. 1st. He may design thereby that the *Syrians* have no Ancient Writers on their side, when they Interpret the Places above-mention'd concerning the *Eucharist*, or *Lord's-Supper*. I answer that if they have none for them, I believe they have none of equal Authority against them. For I don't find that any of the three first Centurys (and this *Version* is suppos'd to have been made some considerable time before the end of that Period) speak at all, concerning the Texts alledg'd; I am sure several Eminent Commentators do understand them of the *Eucharist*, and why the

Syriack

Syrian Translator, though very Ancient, might not do so too, for Reasons best known to himself, I cannot comprehend. 2dly. Mr. Du Pin may be thought to mean, that the *Lord's-Supper* was not called by the Name of *Eucharist* so early.

But as to this, the contrary is so evident from

(a) *Tertullian*, (b) *Ireneus*, (c) *Justin M.* and (d) *Ignatius*, (to name no others) that I cannot suppose it possible for so Learned a Writer to forget it. And therefore I proceed to add, 3dly.

That he may perhaps intend, that the *Bread* in the *Lord's-Supper* was not called by the Title of

Eucharist, so soon as this Translation is suppos'd to have been made. To which I reply, That (e)

Ireneus informs us, that the *Bread*, after Consecration, is no longer Common Bread, but the *Eucharist*.

If it was the *Eucharist* after Consecration, why should we think the Church did not then

call it what it was? And if they did call it the *Eucharist* in the time of that Father, then certainly

the *Syriack Version* might well render it by the same Expression, and yet be as Ancient as we pretend.

From what has been said, I hope it appears, that there is no force in the Objections of Mr.

Du Pin, to overthrow the Antiquity of the *Syriack* Translation, but that it may, notwithstanding them, have been made as early as the date

is, which we have assign'd it.

Having thus, by way of Parenthesis, Vindicated the Antiquity of that *Syriack Version*, which I

have made use of in the present Controversy, I now again fall in with our Author, but, before I

proceed any further, I must observe that I find him here in a complying humour, and because he

is seldom so, I think my self oblig'd to take notice of it. For he acknowledges (p. 57.) that these

seven Pieces are now receiv'd (not without convincing

Arguments)

(a) *Of the Crown.* 3.

(b) *L. 5. c. 2.*

(c) *Apol. 2. p. 97.*

(d) *Ep. 10 Smyrna p. 5.*

(e) *L. 4. c. 34.*

XII.

Arguments) by the *Moderns*. Thus far is very well; and I should have been glad to find our Author so frank in his concessions, if what he grants, had not been attended with a sting in the Tail. For it follows, *Now I say, by more then a parity of Reason, that the Preaching and Revelation of Peter (for Example) were receiv'd by the Ancients, and ought not to be rejected by the Moderns, if the approbation of the Fathers be a proper recommendation of any Book.* The short of the Business is this; that, in our Authors Opinion, there's more reason to look upon the *Revelation and Preaching* of St. Peter as Canonical, then the Seven Pieces above-mention'd, which are now embrac'd by the whole Church as such. We'll try, if you please, and turning back to p. 22, consider what Testimonies are there brought to prove these Treatises, which bear the Name of St. Peter, to have been formerly esteem'd Genuine.

First, for his *Revelation*, we find that it's quoted by (u) *Clemens of Alexandria*; mention'd by *Eusebius*, St. *Jerome*, and *Sozomen*. All this I grant, but then must beg leave to add, that none of these Writers, excepting the first, will do our

Authors cause any manner of Service. For (x) *Eusebius* and (y) St. *Jerome* expressly declare this Piece (as also the *Preaching* too) to be Spurious; and (z) *Sozomen* assures us, that though it was indeed Read in some Churches of *Palestine* once in the year, yet the Ancients absolutely judg'd it a Forgery.

As for the *Preaching of Peter*, (a) *Clemens of Alexandria*, I own, quotes it several times, and he's the only Person I can allow that does as much as seem to favour our Author in the present controversy; excepting only *Damascen*, whom I have not at hand, and therefore can't say what his Opinion might be. *Origen* says not a word of it in his Preface to his Treatise of

(u) *Extracts out of Theod. p. 806, 807.*

(x) l. 3. c. 3.

(y) *Catal. of Eccl. Writers in*

Sim. Peter

(z) l. 7. c. 19.

(a) l. 1. p. 357. l. 2.

p. 390. l. 6.

p. 635, &c.

of * *Principles*, (as is pretended.) He does indeed in his 14th Tome on St. John, but then he considers the Passage there alledg'd as an Objection urg'd by *Heracleon*, and is very far, as any one may perceive, from owning the Authority of the Book. *Lactantius* (p) tells us (p) L. 4. (in the place cited) that the Apostles *Peter* c. 21. and *Paul* Preach'd at Rome, and deliver'd several Prophecies against the *Jews*, which were kept in Writing and confirm'd by the Event. But he does not say, that the Book wherein they were preserv'd, was call'd the *Preaching of Peter*, neither does it any other ways appear that such Prophecies were contain'd in the Book now before us, and therefore his Testimony signifies nothing to the question in hand. As for the *Discourse concerning the Baptism of Hereticks*, among the Works of St. Cyprian, I grant the *Preaching of Peter* is there quoted, if we'll allow the conjecture of *Rigaltius* †, that *Paul* is by mistake set for *Peter*, for 'tis *Paul* in the Text. But what will our Author get by this Concession? Truly very little; he may put it all in his Eye and see never the worse.

* The *Doftrin* indeed of St. *Peter* is mention'd there, but rejected as an Apocryphal Book, neither Wrote by him, whose Name it bears, nor by any Inspir'd Person.

† I could not but smile here at the ingenuity of our Author, in his contrivance to multiply Testimonies for *Spurious Pieces*. For he alledges (p. 32.) this Writer to prove there was a Book call'd the *Preaching of St. Paul*, because it is *actually* so in the Text. And he quotes the very same place (p. 23.) for the *Preaching of St. Peter*, because *Rigaltius* corrects it so in his Notes.

E

For

For that Writer says positively, that the Composer of the *Preaching of Peter* was an Heretick, and proves it too by good Arguments. So that after all, * we have the Testimony of one single Father, and an obscure Church or two in *Palestine* only, for any Authority of these Books, and what Authority they design'd them, we cannot tell, and all the rest of the Catholics of those times, and before them, and since

* I say we have the Testimony but of one single Father for any Authority of these Books (for the Reading one of them *once* a year in an obscure Church or two, is a mean thing ; see above *Sett. VI.*) And yet under what notion he quotes them does not appear ; much less what Authority he ascribes to them. He no where tells us that he look'd upon the *Preaching and Revelation of St. Peter* to have been Wrote by himself and upon that account to be *Canonical*. He might take them for *Ecclesiastical* Pieces, and suppose (which yet was an Error) that the Writer of them gave a true account of some Discourses of that Apostle. As he does in his Treatise, *concerning the Salvation of the Rich*, furnish us with some Passages concerning St. *John*, which *Eusebius* has transfer'd into his *Ecclesiastical History*. It can by no means be prov'd that this Father judg'd these Pieces part of the New Testament, *because he quotes them*. It was the custom of the Ancients (as well as Moderns) to cite Writings which they knew, *not to be Canonical*, as well as those that were. This is sufficiently Evident, and St. *Jerom* takes Particular notice of it in his Epistle to *Dardanus* ; And therefore till there be very good proof to the contrary, we ought not to believe that St. *Clemens* differ'd so very far from the rest of the Fathers, as to advance those Pieces into the Canon, which they generally rejected for *Spurious* ; but rather conclude, that he esteem'd them *at best* no more then Ecclesiastical. And so *Eusebius* seems to affirm concerning him and them. See hereafter *Sett. XIX.* However the case be, see before *Sett. VII.*

(as far as appears) rejected them as Forgeries; and if we may make an Estimate of the whole by the Fragments, which yet remain, 'tis evident they were the Forgeries of Hereticks. For in the (q) *Preaching of Peter* we Read, that the *Jews Worshipp'd Angels, and Archangels and the Months and the Moon.* Which they are charg'd with doing, not when they fell into Idolatry, but in the ordinary Practice of their Religion. We are told also (r) that *Jesus acknowledged himself guilty of Sin, and was in a manner compell'd to submit to the Baptism of John, by his Mother, against his will, &c.* which are gross and † notorious falshoods. And the *Revelation of Peter* informs us, that (s) *abortive and expos'd Infants are committed to the conduct of a Guardian Angel; who may instruct and educate them, and secure their Happiness after they have suffer'd such things as they should have endur'd in the Body; that they shall be as those who have been faithful here for a hundred years; that flashes of fire shall break from these Infants, &c.* with more of the same Nature. Now whosoever shall consider this, and call to mind the perfect silence of the Scripture in such Curiosities, will easily conclude that these discoveries had the same Original with the Whimsical Fancies,

(q) See
Clem.
Alex.
Strom. 1.6.
p. 635.
Orig. Tom.
14. on John
p. 211.
(r) Treatise of
Bapt. of
Heret.
p. 30.
(s) Clem.
Al. Ex-
tracts out
of Theodot.
p. 806,
807.

† There is another passage, that does not (methinks) sound well, quoted by Clemens, out of the *Preaching of St. Peter*, in the sixth Book of his *Stromata* (p. 678.) where we are told, that *the Prophets nam'd Jesus Christ in express words.* Whether this can be fairly reconcil'd with Truth, I shall not determine, but leave to the Readers judgment.

which the *Gnosticks* Publish'd to the World about that time.

The case therefore of the Books call'd, the *Preaching and Revelation of St. Peter*, is, in a Word, this. They contain'd false and Extravagant Doctrin, have no Body on their side at all but one Father and some unknown Churches of *Palestine* (whose just opinion of them we know not,) and were universally rejected by the whole Body of the Catholicks besides, as far as we can Judge at this distance. Now let's turn the Tables, and we shall find the whole Christian World agreed that there is nothing in the Seven Pieces, which we have now under consideration, repugnant to the rest of the Scripture; that even at that time, when they were doubted of by *some*, they were yet receiv'd by *many* others; among whom were several of great Piety and Learning; that *Athanasius*, *Rufinus*, and others, vouch the Authority of the Ancients to prove that they were and ought to be judg'd and accounted Canonical; that, since that, Councils and the whole Church have receiv'd and own'd them for Genuine, and if, after all this, our Author will still say, that there's more reason to receive the *Preaching and Revelation of St. Peter*, then the Pieces we are now examining, into the Code of the New Testament, he may say so, if he pleases; but, I believe, he'll meet with but few that are of his Opinion.

XIII.

VI. To show he'll leave no Stone unturn'd to express the favourable Opinion he has of the *New Testament*, our Author brings in *Celsus* a Heathen (p. 60.) as a Witness against the Christians.

Christians, who exclaims against the too great Liberty they took (as if they were drunk) of changing the first Writing of the Gospel, three or four or more times, that so they might deny whatever was urg'd against them, as retracted before. Our Author somewhere complains of the Clergy for their harsh Language, and violating the Rules of Decency and Civility in their Writings. But certainly there are some cases, wherein it is very difficult to forbear a little severity of Expression. And this I take to be one of them, which I have now before me. To see a Man, who professes himself a Christian, rake up the Objections, not only of the grossest and most Profligate Hereticks, but even of the very Heathens, and make use of them to run down the most Ancient and Venerable Monuments of our Religion, might easily raise a Passion, justifiable by the strictest Rules of Morality. Especially when we find the same Person so resolutely bent on doing all the mischief that he can, as to take not the least notice of the answer, which is to be found in the same place from whence he drew his Objection. For this Objection is quoted by our Author from the Second Book of *Origen* against *Celsus* (p. 77.) and there he might have found this answer too, that they were the *Hereticks*, the *Marcionites*, the *Valentinians*, and the *Lucianists* († some of whom also (t) *Freneus* and (u) *Tertullian* positively accuse of the same tricks) who were guilty of these Preva-

(t) *L. i. c.*
29.
(u) *against Marcion l.*
4. c. 5.

† *Celsus* does not charge all, but only some of the Christians with those Practices; and *Origen* tells us who those some were.

rications. For which the Catholicks were no more answerable then the Church of England was for the Murther of *Charles the First*.

XIV.

VII. To *Celsus*, in the same Page, our Author joyns the *Manicheans* (fitly enough I confess) who shew'd other Scriptures and deny'd the *Genuineness of the whole New Testament*.

Whether will not Men go, or what will they not do, to serve a design? He knows, or at least might know, that the *Manicheans* were as Extravagant and Whimsical a sort of Hereticks as any that troubled the Christian Church.

(x) *Heret.* They held, as (x) *Epiphanius* informs us, That
66. there were two Supreme Gods, the one, a good, the other, a bad one; that they were always at War with one another; that *Manes* was the Holy Ghost; that the Souls of Men, after their decease, should pass into the Bodies of such Beasts as they had Eaten when they were alive, or be united to those Trees which they had planted; that the Sun and Moon were Ships, which convey'd the faithful of their Self to Heaven, and that the Light of the Moon depended on the number of the Souls in it, which, when she was full, she emptied into the Sun by degrees, and so grew dark again. These things they believ'd, or at least maintain'd, with Twenty more of as absurd a Nature. And now, I pray, what does the Opinion, which such as these had of the Canon, signify? They could find nothing in the Books of the Catholicks, wherewith to justify their Notions, and therefore (w) rejected their Authority, and made use of others for their peculiar Doctrines. Our Author might as well have set up the *Alchoran* in opposition to the *New Testament*, and

(w) *S. Aug.*
Treatise of
Heretys. n.
46.

and for so doing have alledg'd the Judgment and Testimony, of the *Turks*. For laying aside the Name, they seem to be every jot as good Christians as the *Manicheans*.

Here our Author brings in two Passages from *Faustus the Manichee*, to show that He and those of his Sect rejected the whole *New Testament*. That they did so *in effect*, is evident and undoubted; for they made it of *no Authority*, by refusing to be concluded by Arguments drawn from thence, pretending that it contain'd many Errors, which had been foisted into the several Books thereof, by the Tricks and Cheats of succeeding Ages, long after the Deaths of the Apostles. They maintain'd it was *full of Corruptions and Falsifications*. And therefore *Faustus* boasts (y) that the *Manichean Faith* alone secur'd the Professors thereof from all danger of Heresy, by instructing them *not to believe every thing which was written in the Name of our Saviour, but to try whether what they Read to have been taught by him, was really true, sound and uncorrupted*. For (as he goes on) there are many *Tares mingled with the Wheat, which an Enemy, during the times of Night and Darknes, has Sown and Scattered in almost all the Scriptures, for the infecting and poisoning the good seed*. And again, (z) he asks the Catholics, *What reason they had to think it strange, if he, selecting those Passages out of the New Testament, that were most pure, and conduc'd to his Salvation, should fling away all the rest, which had been fraudulently convey'd into it by their Predecessors and sullied the Native Beauty and Majesty of the Truth?* This was their constant Practice; when they were press'd with

(y) St. August. against *Faustus* l. 18. c. 3.

(z) L. 32. c. 1.

any Texts, which they could not reconcile to their fond Opinions, they without more ad^o slighted their Authority, affirming the Testimonies produc'd against them, were forg'd and no part of the Doctrin deliver'd by our Blessed Lord and his Apostles. And therefore St.

(a) L. 13.

c. 5. l. 22.

c. 15. l. 32.

c. 19.

Augustine (a) accuses them, as receiving the Scriptures only for fashion's sake, while by asserting them to be *falsified and corrupted*, they perfectly detracted from their Authority; that is, if I understand him aright, they pretended, upon occasion to have a deference for the *New Testament*, whereas really they had none. For they charg'd it with Corruption, and acknowledg'd nothing as an Article of Faith, purely because contain'd in the Books, and upon the warrant, thereof, but because they judg'd it true upon other accounts, and for this Reason were willing to own that it (b) *might possibly* have been deliver'd by Christ or his Disciples.

(b) L. 33.

c. 3.

And therefore I readily joyn with our Author, and acknowledge that the *Manichees* really rejected the whole *New Testament*; not only because there are several passages of *Faustus*, which plainly intimate as much, but also because St. *Augustine* himself seems clearly to have understood them in that Sense. For

(c) L. 32.

c. 16.

(d) See the beginning of that Chapter.

(e) L. 32.

c. 18.

towards the end.

thus we learn from him, (c) that these Hereticks affirm'd their Paraclet *Manicheus* had taught them, that the Scriptures (even (d) the Scriptures of the *New Testament*, receiv'd for Canonical by the Catholicks) were not the Works of the Apostles, but wrote by others in their Names. And we Read again how the same worthy Teacher had inform'd them, (e) that the *Evangelical*

gelical Writings, part of which they refus'd to admit, were not the Apostles. And accordingly we shall observe by and by, that this Father was so sensible, how far these miserable Hereticks had been seduc'd in this matter, that he thought himself concern'd directly to answer this Objection, and prove against his Adversary *Faustus*, that, whatever he and his Party pretended; the Gospels and Epistles, admitted by the Catholick Church, were Genuine and Authentick.

That therefore we may allow our Author, and his Objection against the Canon of the *New Testament*, drawn from the *Manicheans*, all the fair play that can be desir'd, I shall state the full Sense thereof in the two following Propositions.

XV.

(1.) The Books of the *New Testament* were not wrote by the Apostles or Apostolical Men, (f) but drawn up several years after them out of reports, Traditions, and Historical Memoirs.

(f) See *S. Aug. a-
gainst
Faustus l.
33. c. 3.*

(2.) Whoever they were that drew them up, they falsified and corrupted the pure Doctrines of Christianity, by inserting several Errors and contradictions among the Truth. And therefore the *Manichees* admitted the Books just so far and in such particulars as they judg'd them true, and rejected the rest as of no Value.

This is the utmost force, which can be put into the Objection; and we'll now inquire in the next place, what *St. Augustine* return'd by way of Answer.

First,

First, then, to prove that the Writings of the *New Testament* were Genuine, and that the Evangelists and Apostles were the real Authors of those Pieces, which bear their Names, he thus reasons with *Faustus* and his followers.

(g) L. 33.
“ 6.

“ (g) O unhappy and wretched Enemies of
 “ your own Souls ! Tell me, I pray, what
 “ Books can ever be judg’d Authentick, if the
 “ Evangelical, if the Apostolical Writings
 “ don’t deserve to be so esteem’d ? How can
 “ we be ever certain of the Author of any
 “ Treatise in the World, if those Writings,
 “ which the Church, planted by the Apostles
 “ in all Nations, affirms and maintains to be
 “ theirs, may yet be rejected as false and Sup-
 “ posititious ; and instead thereof, others be
 “ receiv’d as really Apostolical, which were
 “ first brought to light by Hereticks, whose
 “ very Masters, from whom they take their
 “ denominations, did not live till long after
 “ the Apostles, and yet pretend to have known
 “ better then the Universal Church, what Writ-
 “ ings those first Preachers of our Religion, left
 “ behind them ? Consider the case of several
 “ Pieces Publish’d about Secular and Human
 “ Learning. There are many of this sort,
 “ which appear under great Names, that are
 “ yet justly rejected by the Judicious, because
 “ they are by no means consistent with the Style
 “ and Genius of them, whose Names they
 “ assume ; or have never, by such as were cap-
 “ able of knowing, been declar’d and acknow-
 “ ledg’d to be the Genuine Works of those to
 “ whom they are ascrib’d by the Ignorant. Do
 not

“ not Physicians, for Examples sake, reject the
 “ Authority of divers Treatises, which fly a-
 “ broad under the Name of *Hippocrates*? And
 “ though there may perhaps be *some* resembl-
 “ ance in Thought and Expression, yet notwith-
 “ standing that, they condemn them as Spuri-
 “ ous, because they fall short of the real Perfor-
 “ mances of that great Man, and have no suffici-
 “ ent Evidence to prove their being Genuine.
 “ And for those, which are indeed his Works,
 “ Whence is it that the Learned conclude they
 “ belong to him, whence is it that those, who
 “ should question the same, would be laugh’d
 “ at, not refuted, but only because a constant
 “ Tradition, from his Age down to the pre-
 “ sent days, has attested them? And he that
 “ should pretend to doubt of a matter, estab-
 “ lish’d by the continued succession of so long a
 “ time, would be accounted mad or distracted.
 “ Whence do Men learn that the Books of
 “ *Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, Varro* and other Au-
 “ thors, are indeed of their composing, but be-
 “ cause they are so inform’d by the Testimonies
 “ of several Ages, succeeding and following one
 “ another? Many too have Wrote largely
 “ concerning Ecclesiastical Affairs, not indeed
 “ with Canonical Authority, but with a desire
 “ of profiting others or themselves. How
 “ know we to whom any of these Discourses is
 “ to be assign’d, but only from hence that their
 “ respective Authors acquainted others with
 “ what they Wrote at the time when they first
 “ Publish’d the same, from whom it has been
 “ convey’d by several hands successively to the
 “ present time, so that, without any doubting
 “ or hesitation we can, when examin’d, con-
 “ cerning

“ cerning any particular Discourse, tell pre-
 “ sently what to answer? But why do I insist
 “ upon things long since past? Consider what
 “ is now before us. Behold here the Treatise
 “ of *Fauftus*; behold my Answer. If any
 “ should in future times enquire, which way
 “ they might be assur’d, that I Wrote the one,
 “ and *Fauftus* the other, how could they be in-
 “ form’d of the Truth, but only by appealing
 “ to the Tradition, which had, from those who
 “ were our contemporaries and knew what we
 “ did, been transmitted to Posterity? Since
 “ then the case is plain and evident, and e-
 “ steem’d so by all the World, in other Writ-
 “ ings, why should it not be so in those of the
 “ Apostles? Who is there so blinded with
 “ Madness, and Possess’d with the Malice of de-
 “ ceiving and lying Devils, as to affirm that the
 “ Church has not the same security for the
 “ Books, which she receives? Can we imagine,
 “ that so many Witnesses of the greatest Faith-
 “ fulness and Integrity, that such an unanimous
 “ Number of Brethren in all Places, agreeing
 “ in the same assertions, should conspire to im-
 “ pose upon the World with false Pieces? Or
 “ that the Churches, which derive their succes-
 “ sion in a continued line from the Apostles,
 “ should not have their Books likewise convey’d
 “ to them, with as certain and steady a Tradi-
 “ tion, as is that upon which we admit Ecclesia-
 “ stical or Prophane Writings? And again in
 another Place, “ You that raise so many scr-
 “ ples about the Authority of our Books, How
 “ will you justify the Epistle of *Manicheus* (b)
 “ and prove that it was Wrote by him? If
 “ any one should contradict you in this matter,
 “ and

(h) L. 32.
 a. 21.

“and boldly affirm that it was none of his;
“bnt a down right Forgery, what would you
“reply? Would not you be ready to laugh
“at the confident Talker, would you not tell
“him, that it was Impudence and Dotage to
“move any doubts concerning that, for which
“you had the successive Testimony of so many
“Persons from the days of your Paraclet?
“And have not we the same too, nay one of a
“much larger extent, for the Books of the A-
“postles? If it would be Ridiculous and Im-
“pertinent, to question whether the Pieces of
“your *Manicheus* be Genuine, is it not much
“more so, to doubt of the Apostolical Writ-
“ings? And are not you to be derided, or
“rather to be pitied, who raise so many diffi-
“culties about them, which are Establish’d up-
“on the Authority of so large and diffusive a
“Testimony, through the several Ages and
“places of the Church, from the days of their
“first Authors?

Thus does the learned Father answer the first Objection, by producing those grounds and reasons, upon which the Catholicks embrac’d the Books of the New Testament as Authentick and Genuine.

We proceed now to the second Objection, which was, that whoever the Men were, which drew up the Books of the New Testament, they falsified and corrupted the pure Doctrins of Christianity, by inserting several Errors and Contradictions among the Truth. Now it having been already prov’d, that these were really the Writings of the Apostles and Apostolick Men, we have nothing else to do but represent the Reasons St. *Augustine* alledges to show,

show, that they neither were nor could be Corrupted, nor yet had any Errors or Contradictions inserted in them.

That they were not falsified or corrupted, he thus argues, "(i) You pretend to prove that *Manicheus* is the Paraclet or Comforter from some Passages in our Books, which yet you say have been corrupted. What would you reply, if we should retort the charge upon you, and affirm that you had falsified them in those Particulars which concern your Paraclet? I suppose, you'd tell us that we accus'd you of a thing impossible, because the Books were in the hands of all Christians before, and you might easily be convict of false dealing by numerous and more Ancient Copies. We say the same too, and urge that those Arguments which are alledg'd, to show you are Innocent in this matter, prove also that no Body else did or could corrupt them. For whoever should first set about such a thing, would quickly be confuted, and the Imposture be discover'd, by consulting other Copies, of which there is a great multitude, dispers'd over all Countries and in all Languages: so that such an attempt would be equally silly and impossible.

And that there might be no Cavil, upon the account of little mistakes to be observ'd in some Copies, the Father adds — "For even in our days some Errors of the Transcribers are usually corrected, either by the assistance of more ancient Books or other Languages.

To this he had spoken more fully before,

— (k) “ If there happen any dispute concerning the exactness of Copies, as to the various Readings, which are but few in number and sufficiently known to the Learned, we have recourse to the Books of those Countries from whence we receiv’d our Copies and Religion together, and are willing they should determine the Controversy. Or if there still appear any difference, the greater number of Copies ought to be preferr’d before the less, those which are most Ancient to those of a later date, and the Original Languages to all others. Thus do they proceed, who, when they meet with any difficulties in the Holy Scriptures, search and examine things with a desire to be instructed, not merely to cavil and dispute. (k) L. II. c. 2.

As to the *Contradictions* and *Errors*, which *Faustus* pretended are to be found in the *New Testament*, St. *Augustine* goes through all the Particulars of the Charge as they are urg’d by his Adversary. But I suppose, it will not be expected that I should do so too, that is none of my business. The Charge contained in the Passages, produc’d from *Faustus*, by our Author, is conceiv’d in *general terms*, and it will be sufficient for me, if thereto I return the Summe of the Father’s *General Answer*, which is easily collected from several Places, and is, in short, this, that, Since the Scriptures are Books of so great Authority (that is, clearly prov’d to have been Wrote by the Followers of our Lord, and by no means wilfully Falsified or Corrupted) (l) we ought to Read them out of a Principle of Piety, not Contention; we ought to

(l) L. 33.
c. 7. l. 32.
c. 16. l. 11.
c. 2, 5, 6.

use

use the greatest Industry and Application in the study of them, and rather judge the Copy faulty, and the Translator mistaken, rather accuse our own Dulness, Negligence, or want of Apprehension, then blame those Excellent and Divine Writings, when at any time we can't understand or reconcile them.

There remains but one Particular more to be examin'd at present, and that is urg'd above in the Words of the Seventh Objection, where we are told that the *Manicheans*, not only deny'd the Genuineness of the whole *New Testament*, but also shew'd other *Scriptures*.

(m) *Epi-
phan.
Heres. 66.
Sect. 13.
(n) Ib. S.
2.*

It is not easy to determine what Books are here more especially design'd by this Expression. Perhaps our Author may intend thereby, the various Treatises Publish'd (m) by *Manicheus*, or the four Pieces, long before Written by (n) *Scythianus*, who liv'd about the time of our Saviour, and was indeed the first Author of most of the Extravagant Opinions, afterwards Publickly asserted and maintain'd by the *Manichees*.

But because there is place for doubting, I think it fair and reasonable to take this Passage in such a Sense, as seems to me most serviceable to the design our Author is here carrying on, and shall therefore suppose he especially intend'd some Books, that were spread abroad in the Apostles Names, distinct from those acknowledged by Catholics, which are all comprehended in the *New Testament*.

(o) *L. 22.
against
Faustus c.
79.*

That the *Manichees* had such Pieces is sufficiently evident from St. *Augustine*, who tells us (o) that they Read Apocryphal Books, drawn

up by certain forgers of Tales, under the Names of the Apostles. And again, (p) that they receiv'd such Scriptures for sincere and Genuine, as were rejected by the Ecclesiastical Canon. Such Scriptures therefore these Here-ticks certainly had, different from those of the Catholick Church; and by the assistance of them, they endeavour'd to support those Er-roneous and false Doctrins, which they em-brac'd.

(p) *Ibid.*
See also l.
13. c. 5. --
l. 33. c. 6.
Treatise
against A-
dimantus
c. 17. -- *Of*
Heresies.
Num. 46.

But before I proceed any further, I think my self here oblig'd to take notice, that our Au-thor (q) in his *Catalogue*, mentions an *Epistle of Christ to Peter and Paul*, and vouches for it the Twenty Eighth Book of St. *Augustine* against *Faustus*, Chapter the Thirteenth: which may perhaps make the unwary Reader believe, that such an Epistle is there set down, as part of the Scripture receiv'd by, and peculiar to, the *Ma-nichees*.

(q) P. 20!

But I must tell him, (1.) That there are but *five* Chapters in all the *Twenty Eighth* Book, and therefore the citing the *Thirteenth* is a mistake. (2.) In the *Fourth* Chapter, where the Father speaks of an Epistle of our Saviour, there is not one word to intimate that it was Wrote, or pretended to be Wrote, to the two Apostles above-mention'd. (3.) Neither in-deed could there be. For it will be Evident to any one, who shall seriously consider the Place, that St. *Augustine* is there arguing against the *Manichees* for pretending they would rather believe the Testimony of Christ concerning himself then any of his Apostles. To which, the Father replies, that "Our Saviour Wrote nothing, and therefore, if we'll believe any

“ Relations concerning him at all, we must be-
 “ lieve those which were drawn up by his Dis-
 “ ciples; that if any Epistle or other Piece
 “ should be now produc’d in his Name, Men
 “ would presently enquire, How it came to
 “ ly hid all this while, who it was that first
 “ brought it to light, whence it was that it had
 “ not been before acknowledg’d, Read, Cele-
 “ brated every where in the Church, from the
 “ days of the Apostles? And that therefore
 “ it would be a prodigious want of considera-
 “ tion to admit that for an Epistle of Christ,
 “ which a *Manichee* should perhaps pretend to
 “ to be at this time of day, and not assent to
 “ those things as done or say’d by him which
 “ are related by St. *Matthew*, &c. Whence it
 is apparent, that the *Manichees* had not *actually*
 produc’d any Writings in the Name of our
 Saviour at that time; and if they had, the same
 Argument would have overthrown them, which
 St. *Augustine* urges against those Pieces which
 were shelter’d under the Titles of the Apostles.
 For certainly, as he tells *Faustus*, “ If their
 “ Writings had been Genuine, if they had taught
 “ nothing but what was agreeable to the Truth,
 “ (r) they would have been own’d and ac-
 knowledg’d by those Holy and Learned Men,
 who liv’d in the days of their pretended Au-
 thors, and been by them and succeeding Ages
 receiv’d among the Books, which were ac-
 counted Canonical, and submitted to as an
 infallible Rule of Faith and Manners. To this
 effect he presses these Hereticks in one place;
 and in (s) another he thus bespeaks them, —
 You produce a Book perhaps, which bears the Name
 of one of the Apostles, who were really chosen by our
 Lord,

(r) l. 22.

c. 79.

See also l.

13. c. 4.

(s) l. 28.

c. 2.

Lord, where you Read that Christ was not born of a Virgin. It is undoubted that either your Gospel or ours must be false, and which do you think in your Consciences it is most reasonable to believe? Shall not I assent to a Book, which the Church that was begun by Christ, and carried on every where by his Apostles in a certain order of Succession to these days, has receiv'd and preserv'd from the beginning? Or shall I give credit to a Piece produc'd by you, which the same Church rejects as utterly unknown to her, and was at first brought to the Publick view, (t) by Men so few in number, if compar'd with the whole Body of Christians, and if so little veracity, as that they are not asham'd to charge our great Master himself with falshood and deceiving?

(t) l. 134
c. 5.

And thus I have gone through all the Parts of the Argument against the Canon of the New Testament, drawn from the Opinions and Practices of the Manichees, and furnish'd the Reader with the Answers, which St. Augustine gives to every Branch thereof. This our Author, if he had so pleas'd, might have done before me; for the Replies are found in the very same Treatise from which he fetch'd his Objections. And I shall appeal to himself whether this be an ingenuous and fair way of proceeding, to revive an old weather-beaten Cavil, and furbish it up with a great deal of Pomp and Ostentation, as if it was able to run down a whole Army of opposers, when yet he neither was nor could be Ignorant, how all the force of it had been shatter'd and broken in pieces above a Thousand years before he was born.

But perhaps our Author will tell me, as he does Mr. *Blackall* in the case of the *Eikon Basilike*, that he is of another Opinion, that he knew of these Answers indeed well enough before, but passed them over in silence, because he judged them insufficient. If he'll venture his Reputation on such a Reply, I cannot help it; though I would advise him as a friend, to offer any thing else rather for his Justification. For the World will not 'twice be imposed upon by the same trick; and since, for instance, after all his Labour and shuffling, (u) the Testimonies of Mrs *Gauden* and Doctor *Walker* will not be reconciled, which he had pretended might be done with a wet Finger, Men will be so furly and ill-natur'd, as to think, that it is something else and not the weakness of an Argument, or Answer, that makes him say nothing to it.

(u) See the
Defence of
the Vindi-
cation of
K. Ch. the
M. p. 44,
53.

But to let that pass at present, I proceed to remark how upon this occasion we are told (p. 63.) that the *Adversaries* of the *Manicheans* had power enough to be counted *Orthodox*. And was there indeed no difference, good Sir, between the two Parties, but that? Do you indeed believe the *Manichean* Doctrine was true? Do you believe the Existence of two Supreme Gods, a Good one and a Bad? Do you believe the Transmigration of Souls, and the other Whimsies which were asserted by those Brainfick Hereticks? If you do, speak out, and then we shall know (as you express it p. 49.) where to have you, and how to deal with you. If you do not, is not this an excellent and very commendable way of proceeding, to endeavour to draw your Readers to believe that of which you

you believe nothing your self; and to perswade them that it was nothing but *Power*, which distinguish'd the *Catholicks* from the *Manicheans*, and made them be accounted *Orthodox*. This is the Eternal Clamour of this kind of Men. They bear the World in hand that it is only Power and Interest, which keeps us in the acknowledgement of the Catholick Doctrin, and if it was not for that, they say we would quickly forsake it. But, pray, Sir, (not to insist now upon the fury and violence of the *Arians*) What Power had the Catholicks in the first 300 years? What force had they then to compel Men to embrace their Doctrin, when they lay under the sharpest Persecutions, and were constantly expos'd to the Fire, to the Sword, and to other severe Tortures, themselves? And yet, even then, they stood up stoutly for the Truth, and inflicted Ecclesiastical Censures on those Hereticks who corrupted the Faith, and met together in Councils, to condemn their Erroneous Opinions, even at the Peril of their Lives. This they did in the case of *Paulus Samosatenus*, Bishop of *Antioch*. They held two Councils there upon his account; the Bishops, when they heard his Opinion, that he asserted Jesus Christ to be no more then a meer Man, came together from several parts, as against a Spoiler and Destroyer of our Lords Flock (so *Eusebius* (a) tells us) and, having first condemn'd his Doctrin, they afterwards depos'd him and substituted another in his Place. Though he kept Possession of the Episcopal Chair and House for three years after the Sentence (as the Learned inform us) by the Assistance of *Zenobia* Queen of *Palmyra*. And

(a) *Eccl. Hist.* l. 7. c. 27.

here I hope (what our Author in his fleeing way calls) *Orthodoxy* and *Power* were not on the same side. Nevertheless the Fathers did not flinch for the matter, but though *Zenobia* asserted the cause of *Paulus*, yet they refus'd to Communicate with him as being a Convict Heretick, after they had sufficiently prov'd him so to be.

XVI.

VIII. We are told (p. 64.) that the *Ebionites* or *Nazarens* (who were the oldest Christians) had a different Copy of St. Matthews Gospel ; that the *Marcionites* had a very different one of St. Luke's ; that St. John's Gospel was attributed to *Cerinthus*, and all the Epistles of St. Paul deny'd by some, and a different Copy of them shown by others.

Our Author has here jumbled a great many Hereticks together, and one Answer might serve them all, by referring to what has been already say'd by way of reply to the Fourth Objection (p. 35, &c.) But I shall distinguish, and give a different account of them severally, that so we may understand how far each of them proceeded, and with what they are justly chargeable, and so give every one a Separate Answer. He tells us, that the *Ebionites* or *Nazarens* were the oldest Christians. We'll lay the Name of *Ebionites* aside for a while, and shall grant what he says concerning the *Nazarens* ; for that indeed was the common Appellation given by the Jews at first to all Christians. For thus we find *Tertullus* accusing St. Paul (*Acts* 24. 5.) as a Ring-leader of the *Sect* of the *Nazarens*. But afterwards this Title was appropriated to a particular Faction. Before the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, (as (b) *Eusebius* and (c) *Epiphanius* tell us,) all the Christians, who were there, being

[b] *Eccl. Hist.* l. 3.
c. 5.
[c] *Heref. 29. Sect.* 7.

being admonish'd from above, retir'd to *Pella*, a City beyond *Jordan*, and by that means escap'd those horrible Plagues, which fell upon the rest of their Country-men. After the departure of the *Roman* Army, the greatest part return'd to *Jerusalem*, as we are expressly informed by (d) *Epiphanius*. and may learn from * *Eusebius*,

[d] *Treatise of Weights and Measures, Sect. 15.*

* We Read in this Historian (l. 3. c. 11.) that, after the Destruction of *Jerusalem* by *Titus*, *Simeon*, Son of *Cleophas*, was chosen Successor to *St. James* in that See; which is an Evidence that the main Body of Christians were return'd into those Parts. For we may be sure the Shepherd was not far from his Flock, and the Bishops had not only their Title from, but also their Residence in, *Jerusalem*, ἐν Ἱερουσαλὴμοις, as both *Eusebius* (l. 3. c. 35. l. 4. c. 5.) and *Epiphanius* (*Heref.* 66. n. 20.) teach us. And therefore I wonder that *Monsieur Valois* (in his Notes on *Eusebius*, l. 4. c. 6.) should place the Episcopal Seat, after *Jerusalem* was taken, at *Pella*, and vouch *Eusebius* for it too, who delivers the direct contrary, as well as *Epiphanius*. This Critick indeed tells us, from *Josephus*, that *Jerusalem* was levelled by *Titus*, and *Epiphanius* also tells us the same. But then the Father adds, that when *Adrian* the Emperour came thither, he found some Houses and a little Church of the Christians Erected on *Mount Oliver* (*Treat. of Weights and Meas. Sect. 14.*) which would make the Place sufficient for the Reception of a Bishop, in those days of Poverty and Persecution. To which may be added, that *Josephus* himself relates, in his Seventh Book of the Wars of the *Jews* (c. 18, 19.) that though *Titus* lay'd the rest of the City even with the Ground, yet he left so much of the West Part thereof standing, as serv'd for the Lodging of a Garrison. Near which, there can be no question, but other Habitations would, in a short time, be Built, if none remain'd void for them, both by *Jews* and *Christians*. And that this was actually so, appears not only from the Place last cited out of *Epiphanius*, but also from *Eusebius* too, who tells us (l. 4. c. 6.) that *Adrian* emptied *Jerusalem* of its Ancient Inhabitants the *Jews*, and drove them quite out of the Countrey. Whence it is evident, that some of them dwelt there till that time.

and there continued under the Government of the Bishops of that Church; the Succession of whom we have set down by (e) *Epiphanius*, from St. *James* the Apostle to his own time. Those Christians, which stay'd behind at *Pella*, were ever after, (f) as the same Author informs us, call'd *Nazarens*, and differ'd from the Catholics in this, that they thought themselves still oblig'd to Circumcision and all the Rites and Ceremonies of the Mosaical Law. Out (g) of them sprang the *Ebionites*, who, as we learn from (h) *Eusebius*, were of two sorts; One of them affirm'd that our Saviour was really the Son of *Joseph*, born of him and *Mary*, as other Men us'd to be of their Parents. The other asserted his Miraculous Incarnation from a Virgin, and yet maintain'd, that he was a meer Man, absolutely denying his Divinity. We see then, how our Author equivocated when he told * us the *Nazarens* were the oldest Christians. Those indeed whom *Tertullus*, in the *Acts*, call'd by that Name, were so; but not those, among whom the *Ebionites* (so styl'd in the most usual sense of the word) sprung up, and who joyn'd with one or other part of this Sect, and therefore, as *Eusebius*, in the place now quoted, tells us, were all call'd promiscuously by that Name;

(e) *Her.*
66. n. 20.

(f) *Her.*
29. n. 7.

[g] *Epiph.*
Her. 30.
n. 1, 2.

[h] l. 3.
c. 27.

See also
Origen a-
gainst *Cel-*
sius l. 5. p.
272.

* Of the *Nazarens* mention'd in the *Acts*, St. *Paul* was say'd to be a Ring-leader. But these *Nazarens*, of which we are here speaking, detested him as an Apostate.

though the more Moderate sort were † also often call'd only *Nazarens*. These still adhering to the Jewish Law, as we above observ'd, (i) rejected all the Epistles of St. Paul, calling him an *Apostate and Deserter*, and receiv'd only the Gospel according to the Hebrews, slighting all the rest, as *Eusebius* there further relates. The Gospel according to the Hebrews was, as we may learn from (k) *Epiphanius* and (l) *St. Jerome*, the Gospel, of St. Matthew in Hebrew, but yet with several Interpolations and Additions of

[i] See
Jren. l. 1. c. 26.

[k] *Heres. 29. n. 9. (l) Against the Pelagians l. 3. in the beginning.*

† Both sorts of *Ebionites*, as *Eusebius* tells us (l. 3. c. 27.) adhered to the Institutions of the Law of *Moses*, and so says *Epiphanius* (*Heres. 29. n. 7.*) did the *Nazarens*, among whom the same Author acknowledges (*Heres. 30. n. 1, 2.*) the *Ebionites* sprang up and took from them, some of their Opinions. 'Tis plain therefore that the *Nazarens* (who agreed with them in many of their Doctrins) were one sort of the *Ebionites*, since else we cannot make two. *Epiphanius* indeed seems to say (*Heres. 19. n. 7.*) that the *Nazarens* receiv'd all the New as well as the Old Testament. But he owns there, that he had not a perfect account of their Tenents, and 'tis Evident he was mistaken in this particular. For since he affirms in the same place, that they strictly adher'd to the Mosaic Law, they must reject the Epistles of St. Paul, which declar'd against the Obligation thereof. And that there were two sorts of *Ebionites*, which agreed in this matter, *Origen* (l. 5. against *Celsus* p. 272, 274.) affirms, as well as *Eusebius* ; and also tells us before (l. 2. p. 56.) that the Jews call'd all those, who cleaving still to their Rites and Ceremonies, own'd Jesus for their Messiah, *Ebionites*. And therefore since the *Nazarens* did so, they were undoubtedly sometimes call'd by that Name, as well as other times by that of *Nazarens*.

their

(m) *Heref.*
39. n. 13.

their own, * though without making any alterations in what they found in the Authentick Copies before. The other Party, more properly call'd *Ebionites*, corrupted the Gospel of St. *Matthew* in several Particulars, took away the Genealogy of our Saviour, and alter'd it in other Passages, as (m) *Epiphanius* teaches us. Besides, they only admitted the Books of *Moses* and *Joshua* of the *Old Testament*, rejecting all the Prophets, deriding and cursing *David* and *Solomon*, *Elijah*, *Elisha*, *Esay*, *Jeremy* and the rest, wherein they were perfectly distinguish'd from the *Nazarens*, who own'd and esteem'd them all. However both Parties, as we have seen, agreed in this, that they rejected all St. *Paul's* Epistles, despis'd all the other Gospels, and receiv'd only that of St. *Matthew*, which they had more or less alter'd with their interpolations.

And now are not these excellent Witnesses for our Author against the establish'd Canon? Do not they effectually prove, that the Epistles, we have under St. *Paul's* Name, are falsely ascrib'd to him, who (as we above observ'd) inveigh'd against St. *Paul* himself, as a Deserter of the Law, as a Cheat and Impostor; and in contempt, as *Epiphanius* farther remarks, us'd

* *Epiphanius* in the Place just before cited tells us that they had the Gospel, according to St. *Matthew*, complete and entire; therefore it was neither mutilated nor corrupted. And St. *Jerome* in divers places mentions several Historical Passages that are not in our Gospel; thence it appears they made additions.

to call him, *the Man of Tarsus*, and would needs have him, though born a Jew, to be a Gentile Profelyte. They rejected not the Epistles, but because they rejected the Apostle himself and his Doctrine.

Of the same Kidney with these were (n) the *Elcsaites*, a Fantastical and craz'd Sect, who, as (o) *Epiphanius* tells us, did in his time Worship two Women, descended from their Founder, for Goddesses; affirming also the Holy Ghost to be the Sister of *Jesus Christ*, and that both of them had Bodies Fourscore and Sixteen Miles in height, and Twenty Four broad. The Author of this (p) Heresy joyn'd himself to the *Ebionites*, and therefore in rejecting the Writings of *St. Paul*, 'tis evident they proceeded upon the same Principles with the rest of that Faction. So likewise did that party of the (q) *Encratites*, who were call'd *Severians*, and believ'd (r) the *Vine* to have been begotten of the Earth by the Devil, in the form of a Serpent, whose windings and turnings they pretended to be represented by the twistings of that Plant, and the drops of Poyson by the Grapes. They ascrib'd also the Production of Women entirely to the Wicked Spirit, but in Men they say'd the upper half was the Work of the good Good. These, as (s) *Eusebius* informs us, curs'd the Apostle, and absolutely denied to receive what he Wrote. But neither they, nor the *Elcsaites* will do our Authors Cause any service, though we should suppose them to have been Persons of as great Sense and Understanding, as they really were of Ignorance and Folly. For they refus'd not the Epistles which we ascribe to *St. Paul*, because

(n) *Origen*
in *Euseb.*

l. 6. c. 38.

(o) *Her.* 53

and 19. s.

2, and 4.

(p) *Id.*

Her. 19.

s. 5. *Her.*

30. s. 3.

(q) *Orig.*

against

Celsus l. 5.

p. 274.

(r) *Epiph.*

Her. 45.

s. 1, 2.

(s) l. 4. c.

22.

cause they did not think them Genuine, or believ'd they had been forg'd by others in his Name. No: they allow'd them to be his, and for *that very Reason* rejected them, even because they would not be concluded by any thing which he taught, nor submit to his Authority. When our Author tells the World he does so too, I may think my self oblig'd to defend our Religion against him, and those Judaizers, whom we are now considering.

At present, my business is only to assert that our Canon is Genuine, and the Books, which we receive, the true Writings of those to whom they are ascrib'd. This none of the *Ebionites*, or their Party denied, but they endeavour'd to run down *the Writers themselves*; and since they had so little Christianity as to attempt that, I think, I may safely say, there can be no difficulty in determining whether the Copies of St. *Matthew*, which any of them kept, or that which was preserv'd by *the whole Catholick Church* besides, ought to be look'd upon as Authentick.

However we must distinguish here between the Copy of the *Nazarens*, and of the *Ebionites*, strictly so call'd. The latter had corrupted and alter'd and interpolated the Gospel according to St. *Matthew*, and therefore their Copy was justly stil'd Spurious. But the Gospel according to the *Hebrews*, which the *Nazarens* embrac'd, contain'd no alterations (as was above observ'd) of what St. *Matthew* Wrote, but only the addition of some Historical Passages that had been gather'd from Oral Information or Tradition, and were added in their proper Places, to preserve them and make
the

the story more full and compleat. Several of these might probably be true, and therefore, when not pretended to be Wrote by St. *Matthew*, ought not to be call'd Spurious or a Forgery. Canonical indeed they were not, because not the Work of the Apostle, as appears from *all the Copies* of the *Catholicks*; but they might deserve the Name of *Ecclesiastical History*, and under that notion be quoted (with Caution) as well as any other Writing of that Nature.

It follows, *the Marcionites had a very different Copy of St. Luke*. No doubt of it. He might have added too, that these were the Men, (n) *who show'd a different Copy of most of St. Paul's Epistles*, that is, of such as they allow'd; † (o) *for they rejected those to Timothy and Titus*. And there was good Reason for what they did. Since they held that there were two Gods, one of the *Old Testament* and another of the *New*; that the former made the World, and was the cause of all Wars and Contentions; that *Jesus Christ* was the Son of the other, and sent by his Father to overthrow and destroy all the Works

XVII.

(n) *Iren.*
l. 1. c. 29.
Epiphan.
Here. 42.
n. 9.
(o) *ib. and*
Tertull. a-
gainst
Marcion l.
5. c. 21.

† *Epiphanius* also tells us that *Marcion* rejected the Epistle to the *Hebrews*; but he ought not to be charg'd with that as a Crime, because it was not *then generally admitted* by all the *Catholicks*, and therefore *Tertullian* remarks only that he did not receive the two Epistles to *Timothy* and that to *Titus*. What Opinion this Heretick had of the other three Gospels, and of the Canonical Epistles. does not belong to my present business, which is only to follow my Author, whether he leads me.

of

of the *Old-Testament-God* ; with more such
 (p) l. 1. c. stuff, as we may Read in (p) *Ireneus*, (q) *Ter-*
 29. tullian and (r) *Epiphanius*. Now what should
 (b) against these Men do with our Gospels and Epistles,
 Marcion. at least till they had chang'd and alter'd them?
 (r) *Heref.* Since there is nothing in them, which Esta-
 42. blishes, but many Passages which overthrow
 their fond and lewd Opinions. *Ireneus* and
Tertullian therefore proceeded rationally in
 appealing to all the Churches in the World
 against them. *The former* urges that the Dis-
 ciples of our Lord taught no such Doctrines,
 (s) l. 3. c. (s) either in the Churches, which they found-
 4. ed, or (t) yet in those Writings, which they
 (t) l. 3. c. left behind them, and (u) which were preserv'd
 5, 6. entire to all the World, by the whole Body of
 (u) l. 4. c. Christians. The latter presses them to consult
 63. (x) the *Apostolick Churches* and those that held
 [x] l. 4. Communion with them, and then tell him, in
 against which of them, those *Herefies* that *Marcion* main-
 Marcion c. tain'd, or those *Scriptures*, that he had alter'd
 4, 5. and corrupted, were embrac'd. The contrary
 Of Pre- to all this was evident. The *Catholicks Copies*
 script. c. were all the same, as to the Books the *Here-*
 32, 33, 36. tick rejected, as well as to the Places he had
 See this corrupted ; the *Catholick Doctrins* were all
 prosecuted the same, and none agreed with *Marcion*, and
 more at therefore these Fathers concluded, as justly
 large here- they might (especially being no farther re-
 after, Sect. mov'd from the Apostles themselves, then
 XXXIV. the Second Century) that the Cheat and Im-
 posture lay on the side of *Marcion* and his
 Followers.

XVIII. Our Author proceeds, *St. Johns Gospel was*
attributed to Cerinthus. This we confess is very
 true,

true, and it was done, as we find in (y) *Epi- [y] Heresi-*
phanus by some, who upon that account were 51. n. 3.
 call'd *Alogi*. They rejected the *Logos* or *Word*,
 and would not allow what *St. John* Writes in
 the beginning of his Gospel to be true con-
 cerning our Saviour. And because they had
 not the face openly to appear against what was
 taught by an Apostle, they bring several Ob-
 jections to show that it was none of his (which
Epiphanius answers at large) and after all ,
 would have it fix'd on the Heretick *Cerintus*.
 But they were very absurd in so doing, as the
 same Father observes in the following Section ?
 (z) For how could those things be Wrote by [z] *ib. n.*
Cerintus, which do in direct terms contradict 4.
 his Doctrine? He asserted *Jesus Christ* to be a
meer Man, whereas the Author of this Gospel
 asserts him to be the *Word*, which was from *Eternity*,
 which came down from *Heaven*, and was made *flesh*
 for our sakes. *Cerintus* therefore was not,
 could not be the Author, unless we'll suppose,
 that he forg'd a Gospel under the Name of
 an Apostle, on purpose to overthrow what him-
 self taught and maintain'd every where. We
 see then that *St. John's Title*, notwithstanding
 what has been say'd, remains firm and un-
 shaken ; and it will be further strengthned, if
 we consider that *Ireneus* (l. 3. c. 11. (a)) [a] p. 257
 makes it his business to prove that the begin-
 ning of this Gospel was Wrote expressly by the
 Apostle to oppose the Heresies and Errors of
Cerintus. And the same also is affirm'd by
St. (b) Jerome, who tells us, that upon the [b] See
 desire of the *Asian Bishops* *St. John* Wrote his *Catal. of*
 Gospel after the rest of the Evangelists, (as *Ecclesiasti-*
 for other Reasons, so particularly) that he *cal Writers*
 might *in St. John*
the Apostle

might confute *Cerintus*, and the Heresy of the *Ebionites*, which was then rising in the Church.

XIX. IX. Our Author further urges p. 53, &c)
 [b] *Eccl. Hist.* 1, 3. that (b) Eusebius rejects the *Acts*, Gospel, Preaching and Revelation of Peter from being Authentick, for no other Reason, but because no Ancient or Modern Writer (says he) has quoted proofs out of them. But herein Eusebius was mistaken; for the contrary appears by the Testimonies mark'd in the Catalogue, which any body may compare with the Originals. In (c) another place he says that the Gospel of Peter, Thomas, Matthias and such like, with the *Acts* of Andrew, John and the other Apostles are Spurious, because no Ecclesiastick Writer, from the time of the Apostles down to his own, has vouchsaf'd to quote them; which is absolutely false of some, as we have already seen. — Had Eusebius found any of these Pieces cited by the precedent Orthodox Writers, he would have own'd them as genuine Productions of the Apostles, and admitted them, as we say, into the Canon. But having met with no such Citations, he presently concluded there were none; which made him reject these Books. And I say (what I have already demonstrated) that proofs were quoted out of some of them long before, so that they might still belong to the Canon for all Eusebius.

[c] 1, 3. c. 25.

¶ This is a long-winded Objection, but we shall better understand what strength there is in it, if it be divided into the three following Propositions. (1.) That *Eusebius* rejects the aforesay'd Books, only because he thought that none of them had been quoted and mention'd by the Ancients; when yet some of them really

really were. (2.) That if he had known, they had been so quoted, he would have look'd upon them as Canonical. (• 3.) It being evident therefore, that they were so quoted by the Ancients, they ought, according to *Eusebius* his Principles, to be esteem'd Canonical. This is the force of the Objection, and to this there are two Answers drawn up, which it is pretended we are like to make. But of all People in the World, I shall not trust our Author to give in any Answers in my Name. If they be good for any thing, he'll certainly leave them behind, him. Thus he did in the case of *Origen* and *St. Augustine*, who had furnish'd him with very good ones to the Objections of *Celsus* and *Faustus*, but he fairly dropt them by the way, and so left the Heathen and the Heretick in Possession of the Field. And I dare say, that if he had not thought he could easily overthrow those Answers he produces in this place in the Name of his Adversaries, we should never have heard one word of them. I am resolv'd therefore, to have nothing to do with his Answers, whether good or bad, but shall give in such as I will stand by, and accordingly speak to the above-mention'd Propositions in their order.

The first is, that *Eusebius* rejects the foresaid Books only because he thought they were none of them quoted or mention'd by the Ancients, when yet some of them really were. To which I answer, (1.) That *Eusebius* could not be Ignorant, that some of these Pieces are quoted by *Clemens of Alexandria* (who mentions them several times) being very much conversant in the works of that Father, and having expressly

- (d) *Eccl. Hist. l. 6. c. 14.* taken notice that (d) one of them was cited by him; and therefore when he says that none of these Books are quoted by the Ancients, he must be understood to mean (not that they are never quoted at all, for that he knew they were, and says so expressly concerning the Revelation of St. Peter (*Eccles Hist. l. 3. c. 25*) but) that they were never quoted by any as Canonical, and this was a sufficient reason, why he should not admit them under that notion. Though (2.) this is not the only Reason; for he observes of several of them, that (e) they contain'd a Doctrin contrary to the Catholick Faith which was planted by the Apostles, and therefore ought to be censur'd and rejected as the undoubted Contrivances and Forgeries of Hereticks.
- (e) *l. 3. c. 25.*

The Second Proposition is, That if *Eusebius* had known that any of these Pieces had been ever quoted by the Ancients, he would have esteem'd them Canonical. I answer, it is evident from what has been just now say'd, that *Eusebius* did know it and yet would not receive them into the Canon. The bare quoting a Book, except it be quoted as part of the Rule of Faith, or a Genuine Writing Compos'd or Authoriz'd by the Apostles, signifies nothing in this case, as has been already prov'd. Nay, I shall further add, that if *Eusebius* had known, that some of the Ancients had really quoted one or more of these Pieces as Canonical, that alone would not have induc'd him to receive them as such. For this was the very case of the Epistle of St. James, the Second of St. Peter, and the rest of the once controverted Pieces.

They

They were quoted by many, and quoted by many too as Canonical, yet because the whole Church was not then acquainted with the Reasons, which afterward satisfied her to admit these Books as parts of the Code of the *New Testament*, we see that they were lay'd aside and not advanc'd to that honour by *Eusebius*.

The Third Proposition is, That since these Acts, Gospel, Preaching, Revelation of St. *Peter*, and the others, were some of them really quoted by the Ancients, they ought, according to the Principles of *Eusebius*, to be receiv'd for Canonical. I answer, No; unless quoted as Canonical, and prov'd Canonical too, by such Testimonies as were sufficient to satisfy the Catholick Church, as appears by the Instances of the *Epistle* of St. *James*, and the rest above-mention'd. When *Eusebius* could not meet with so much as one Primitive Father, who cited these Books for Canonical, *that alone* (though he had another reason too against divers of them, as appears before) was sufficient warrant for him to reject them. But for the introducing them into the Canon, a constant and well attested Tradition, by such as were capable of Judging, from the first Ages, that they had been prov'd Genuine, upon Authentick Testimonies, was requisite in his Opinion, and therefore our Authors Objection vanishes into air and signifies just nothing.

X. I come now to the last Objection, which is founded on a long Passage of Mr. *Dodwell*, who (as is insinuated) reflects more upon the

XX.

G z

Certainty

Certainty and Authority of the Canon of the *New Testament*, then any thing, which had been before excepted against, in our Author. This is usher'd in, with great Pomp and Ceremony; for we Read (p. 69.) that *Mr. D. alone, though a Layman, understands as much Ecclesiastical History, as the Divines of all Churches put together.* This is a high flight indeed; methinks it had been enough to have made him understand as much as all the *English Divines*, but to bring in the Divines of all other Churches besides, is a little too Extravagant, and more, I am certain, than our Author *can possibly know.* I shall not in the least detract from the true Character of that worthy Gentleman, who ought to be (and I believe generally is) valued for his great Learning and Piety, and will, I am confident, give our Author no thanks for his Complement, or for bringing him in as a Witness in the case now before us. For he is quite of another Opinion, and tells us expressly but a few Pages before that Passage which is produc'd by our Author, that (f) *there is no manner of reason to doubt of that Tradition, which has transmitted to us the Canon of the New Testament.* This, I think, is a point blank contradiction to the Natural design and tendency of the Treatise we are now considering, since that runs all into confusion, and plainly aims at the perswading Men, that in the Business of the Canon, we have nothing but Darkness and Obscurity.

(f) *Sect.*
36. p. 62.

Mr. *Dodwell's* Principal Intention in the long Passage quoted from him, was to show, that we have as good Evidence, that the *Practical Traditions* (as for Instance, Episcopal Government)

ment) which obtain'd in the time of *Ireneus*, and were deliver'd *as such*, were really *Apostolical Institutions*, as there is for the Canon of the *New Testament* ; because the Books, we now receive for *Canonical or our Rule of Faith*, were not so fix'd and determin'd till the beginning of the Second Century, as to be appeal'd to by the Christian Church under that notion. And they were then settled upon the Testimony of the same Persons (and sent (g) abroad too into all places in the year 107) who convey'd these Traditions, and who having been *conversant with and instructed by the Apostles*, were without doubt sufficiently qualified to give in Evidence concerning their Writings and to distinguish them from all others, which might go abroad falsely under their Names.

(g) See his
Addenda
to p. 73.
and his
Chronolo-
gy.

This I take to be the main design of the Passage now before us, with what precedes and follows in the Original (from Section 35 to Section 41 inclusively ;) but because there are some Particulars therein, which may deserve a little further clearing or illustration, I shall employ a few Pages thereupon, and if in any thing I differ from that Learned Gentleman, I know he'll allow me the same Liberty of Thought and Judgment, concerning matters of Fact, which himself took before me.

While the Apostles travell'd up and down, Preaching in several Places and Countries, they Wrote those Pieces, which we now have under their Names, but for the *most* part, as Criticks observe, *after* the middle of the First Century. This is a sufficient Reason, why in those times of War and Persecution, *some* of them might

XXI.

not come to the hands of *many*, who liv'd in *remote and distant Places*, till that Age was almost or perhaps quite expir'd. Though that *several* were carefully transmitted by the depositaries of them to *other Churches and Persons*, with whom they had the most convenient Correspondence, is a thing easy to be prov'd, because we find Expressions borrowed from them by the earliest Writers.

(h) p. 18, 60. * For thus there are two Passages of (b) St. Luke, and one (i) of St. Peter's first Epistle, and another (k) of the Second to Timothy, and divers of the Epistle (l) to the Hebrews, made use of by Clemens, Bishop of Rome; and the first Epistle (m) of St. Paul to the Corinthians, is very much recommended by the same Father to the Christians of that City. Barnabas gives us the direct words of two Texts in St. (n) (o) p. 217. Matthew and (o) St. Luke. There are four or five Passages in *Hermas*, which seem to have great affinity with so many Texts in the *Old and New Testament*: But I own they may be disputed, especially by those who look upon the Visions and Conversations, mention'd in that

* There may be other Passages in the Epistle of St. Clemens, &c. taken out of the New Testament, which have escap'd my Observation. And there are some (besides these) of which I did take notice, but omitted them, because they are in the Old Testament too, and therefore, for ought I could tell, might be borrowed from thence. That this Father had Read the Epistle to the Romans, there can be no doubt, and therefore I did not remark, that he Salutes the *Corinthians* almost in the very same words that St. Paul us'd to the Romans.

Book, to have been real, and I will not insist upon them, but only observe, that there is as much Evidence that this Author borrowed from the *New Testament* as there is that he borrowed from the *Old*. Ignatius mentions (p) St. Paul's Epistle to the *Ephesians*, and seems plainly to have taken Expressions (q) from it, (r) from St. *Matthew*, and from the first (s) Epistle to the *Corinthians*. (t) *Polycarp* is Copious in his quotations. In him we meet with Words taken out of St. *Matthew*, St. *Luke*, the *Acts*, the *Romans*, the first Epistle to the *Corinthians*, the *Galatians*, the *Ephesians*, the first Epistle of St. *Peter* and of St. *John*, and he twice mentions St. Paul's Epistle to the *Philippians*.

[p] *Epist.*
to the *Eph.*
p. 24.
[q] *Epist.*
to *Polycarp*
p. 13.
[r] *lb.* p.
11.
[s] *Epist.*
to the
Ephes. p.
27. *Lond.*
Edit. 4to.
1680.
[t] In ma-
ny places.

All the Inference I intend to make from hence, is only this, that these Books, from whence the Authors just now mention'd, fetch'd all the Passages we refer to, were then undoubtedly dispers'd abroad in some parts of the Christian World, since they had been Read by these Fathers, and were made use of by them in their Writings. And, I think, I need not attempt to prove, that they were look'd upon as *Canonical*, at the same time. For it is morally impossible to suppose, that Pieces Wrote or Authoriz'd by the Apostles, should not be esteem'd *Canonical* or *Rules of Faith* by all Christians to whom they were communicated, since the Knowledge which they had of the Doctrine of Faith was entirely deriv'd from them and their Instructions.

It's true, the Writers we are now considering, very rarely give us † the Name of the Book or Author from whence they fetch any Passage, and therefore Mr. D's remark is very just, that the succeeding Ages of the Church could not, *in such cases*, learn from them what Pieces were to be parts of the Christian Canon. They produce Texts indeed from Authors that were Canonical, but they don't always tell us so, when they produce them; and therefore their Testimony alone is not sufficient to inform us, what are the Genuine Writings of the Apostles and what are not. This we can learn from none but those, who either recommend a particular Book by Name, or at least tell us whence they draw their Passages. And this is so seldom done by the Authors now mention'd that all the Evidence we can derive from them,

† This is urg'd as an Objection, that none of the Evangelists is call'd by his own Name, in the Writings of *Clemens*, &c. I grant it; but what would be infer'd from thence, besides what is here consider'd, I cannot imagine. Whatever is intended, will equally affect the Old Testament. For *St. Clemens*, among all the quotations he fetches thence, does not that I perceive (and I was careful in making the observation) so much as once *directly cite by Name* any of the Writers thereof, (except *Moses* and *David* once or twice,) from which he Produces his Testimonies. And yet there's no question, but he judg'd the *Old Testament* Canonical. As *Justin M.* certainly did the *New*; and yet though he makes use of many Places, out of several Books thereof, and speaks of the Gospels, and Monuments of the Apostles, in general, I am very much mistaken, if he quotes any of them by Name, besides the *Revelation*, which he expressly ascribes to *St. John* the Apostle.

will

will not extend to above (u) three or four Pieces. The assurance we have that the other Books of the *New Testament* are Canonical, must be taken from the Writers of the Second Century, at least as far as we know now, (I mean such Writers as follow'd Ignatius and Polycarp here mention'd by Mr. D.) and the Testimony of them is unexceptionable, since conversing with the Disciples of the Apostles, they could easily be inform'd by them what Books were really Genuine and Apostolical.

But we are told, that the Writers of those times do not chequer their Works with Texts of the *New Testament*, which yet is the custom of the more Modern, and was also theirs in such Books as they acknowledg'd for Scripture. For they most frequently cite the Books of the *Old Testament*, and would doubtless have done so by those of the *New*, if they had been receiv'd for Canonical. That the Books of the *New Testament* could not fail of being judg'd Canonical, by those who knew their Authors, has been observ'd already more than once; and therefore I proceed to remark, that if these words refer to the latter Writers of the Canon, they are express'd very obscurely, and will fall under consideration immediately. If they be design'd to comprehend Clemens, Barnabas, Hermas, Ignatius and Polycarp (and I think, they can't be understood otherwise) I must confess that I wonder very much at them. For the two first fetch Passages from the *New Testament* as well (though not so often) as from the *Old*. The third may be suppos'd to cite neither or both. The fourth and fifth have certainly more Texts out of the Gospels and Epistles than out of the whole *Old Testament*.

And

[u] The first Epistle to the Corinth. the Epistles to the Eph. and to the Philippians.

And the latter of these two, I mean *Polycarp*, has above Twenty Passages out of the *New Testament* in his short Epistle, so that it may very well be say'd to be *chequer'd* with them.

XXII.

Whether the later Writers of the *New Testament* saw all that had been Wrote by the former, I shall not take upon me to determine. But I think the not quoting them or the *seeming* contradictions between them, are no arguments to the contrary. For the *former* is the case of several Prophets and Writers of the *Old Testament*, who don't quote their Predecessors; and those things (u) which now seem contradictions to us, might perhaps be little or none to them, who were acquainted with the Circumstances of the Age, and admit, it may be, as easy a solution, as the difference of the genealogies upon account of the Natural and Legal Fathers, does from (x) the relation of *Africanus*. Sure I am that St. *Peter* was acquainted with (y) some of St. *Paul's* Epistles, and that they were then judg'd Canonical. And that he had also Read St. *Mark's* Gospel, St. *Paul* that of St. *Luke*, and St. *John*, all the other three, has been above prov'd by Ecclesiastical Testimony. To which I shall add, that *Grotius* affirms St. *Luke* to have certainly Read the Gospels of St. *Matthew* and St. *Mark*, and proves it from hence, because in reporting the same Passages, he sometimes uses their very Words.

(u) See Mr. D.'s *Dissertation on Irenaeus*, Diff. 1. S. 48.

(x) See *Eucl. Hist. l. 1. c. 7.*
(y) 2d, *Epist. 3. 15, 16.*

XXIII.

I dare not affirm, that the Fathers of whom we are now speaking, cited any Texts from such Gospels as are *properly Spurious*, because it does

does not appear to me ; (2) much less that they attributed the same Authority to them, that they did to the Genuine Writings of the Apostles, because of this there is no manner of Evidence. For though there be some Passages in them which are not mention'd in our Evangelists, and others differently express'd from what we now Read, yet no such consequence can be drawn from these Premises.

(2) See above Sect. V. in answer to the first Objection.

For first, the Citations might perhaps be made from no Books at all. Thus, though it be true that St. Paul, St. Barnabas, and St. Ignatius, cite an Expression or two as spoken by our Saviour, which are not to be found in our Gospels, yet it does not follow that they took them from Spurious Writers ; they might easily receive them from Ear-Witnesses. They were remov'd at so little a distance from our Saviour, that they certainly convers'd with his immediate Disciples, from whom they might hear Relations of several considerable Actions and Sayings of his, which were not recorded by the Evangelists.

Neither does it follow, that if a Passage be not express'd just after the same manner that we find it in the *New Testament*, therefore it ought to be look'd upon as *interpolated* or drawn from the Books of some *Spurious Writers*. For it is well known, that many of the Fathers, as well of the later as of the first Ages, quote the Texts of Scripture by memory, and often design to give the Sense, without confining themselves to the Words, of the Original. Many Instances might be given of this Nature, but I shall refer the Reader at present only to the Epistle of St. Barnabas, where he'll find numerous

merous proofs of this assertion in Texts cited
 (a) p. 221. from the *Old Testament*; particularly (a) in
 (b) p. 228, the Promise of entering the Holy Land, (b) the
 229. Sacrificing of the *Goat* and (c) the Circumcision
 (c) p. 229. of the Heart.

But if we should go further, and suppose that some of the Writers of that Age, quoted other Gospels or Histories of our Lord, then those which are now esteem'd Authentick in the Church, yet I don't see what can be infer'd from thence, that may be in the least a Prejudice to our cause, or shew that there was no difference *then* put between Spurious and Genuine Writings. * For I think, it can't be question'd,

* Though it is possible there might be some Spurious Gospels at those times forg'd and set forth under great Names; yet that there were *some* too Wrote by honest Christians, besides the inspired ones, cannot, I think, be doubted by any who shall consider what is the usual Practice of Mankind on such *great* Occasions. And to some of these as well as the Gospels of St. *Matthew* and St. *Mark*, St. *Luke* in all probability refers at the beginning of his. For notwithstanding what our Author (p. 50.) and others besides him are pleas'd to say, yet I doubt not to affirm, that St. *Luke* does not fasten any bad Character on the Gospels he had Read, nor can his Words be drawn to insinuate any such thing without the greatest Violence. Nay it seems plain to me that the two first Verses of his Gospel intimate the direct contrary. And in this I am the more confirm'd, because since the Writing of this, I find that *Casaubon* and *Lightfoot* are of the same Opinion as to the whole; and *Grotius* seems to have judg'd so too in the main. Only he thinks that some of these Writers, gathering what they related, from uncertain Report, fell into great Errors. That may be (and questionless was) true of some, but not of all. And St. *Luke* does not seem to have seen any Spurious (if at least any such were extant so early) or erroneous Gospels. For he does not charge those, who labour'd before him in that Argument, either with wilful falsifications or negligent mistakes. but

but that several would Publish Accounts of the Life and Actions of our Saviour, who were his honest and Faithful Disciples, and inserted nothing in the Story, but what they had good ground to believe true and certain, though they were not infallible in their Narrations. From some of these, the Writers that follow'd after might quote Passages, and that justifiably enough, as from those, whom they esteem'd (and who were as to the main) faithful Historians. Though when the four Gospels, which we now have, were *Publish'd to the whole Church*, the estimation of those other Histories might sink, and so they not be transmitted to Posterity, as not being of equal Authority.

And as there were *Histories of the Life and Preaching* of our Lord, so were there too without doubt Relations of the Miracles and Actions of his Followers, and *Summaries of the Doctrines and Instructions of the Apostles*; which being drawn up by those who heard and convers'd with them, were really of great use to the faithful, and might be quoted by them upon occasion without any manner of blame. Many of these, Learned Men judge it probable, were in process of time collected into one Body with the *Doctrines of Apostolical Men* written afterwards, and make up the best and most Instructive part of those, which are call'd the *Apostolical Constitutions*. Though the addition of several Impertinences, Errors, Heresies and Contradictions, and especially the *pretending* (in divers places) *the whole to have been dictated by the Twelve Apostles, St. James Bp. of Jerusalem* (whom they Erroneously distinguish from the Apostle

XXIV.

Apostle of that Name) and St. Paul, in the presence of the Seven Deacons, (though it's plain St. Stephen suffer'd Martyrdom, before St. Paul's Conversion) cause the composition, as we now have it, to be justly censur'd for Suppositious.

From what has been say'd, it is apparent, I think, that we ought not presently to conclude every thing which is not found in our Bibles, to be fetch'd from *Spurious Writings*, since nothing deserves *that Name*, but what is properly a *Forgery*. Several of these there were indeed in those early days, but it no ways appears that the Writers we are now discoursing of, borrow'd from them. More likely it is that what they took from Books not Apostolical, was from the accounts (given by the true Disciples of our Lord) of the Actions, and Preaching and Doctrine of himself and his Apostles ; which though they were not part of the Canon, yet were really useful, and might, for that reason, be Read with Profit and quoted with Authority as Pieces Ecclesiastical.

XXV. But there is one Particular, which deserves a more accurate examination. It is p. 72. of our Authors Citation out of Mr. D. were two *Johns* are reckon'd among the Writers of the *New Testament*. This that Learned Gentleman had before enlarg'd on in the 4th and 5th Sections of the same Discourse, and will have *John*, a Presbyter of that time, and not *John* the Apostle, to have been the Author of the *Revelation* and also of the Second and Third Epistle. The main Arguments he insists upon are, (1.) The Authority of *Dionysius* Bishop of *Alexandria*;
part

part of whose Discourse upon that Subject, we have in the (d) *Ecclesiastical History of Eusebius.* (d) l. 7. c. (2.) The Reasons of that Father, which are the difference of the Style, and that the Author of the *Revelation* sets down his Name frequently, which St. *John* the Apostle does not in his other Pieces.

To which I Answer, That neither the Authority nor the Reasons of *Dionysius* affect the two Epistles. He does not at all argue against them; and therefore they may be the Genuine Works of that Apostle, to whom (as he owns) they were commonly ascrib'd, for all him. And *Monsieur du Pin*, who has the deserv'd Reputation of an able Critick, tells us that the Style, and Spirit, and the Thoughts of these Epistles, as well as the concurring Judgment of most of the Fathers, make it evident that they belong to the Evangelist.

(e) Prelim. Dissert. to his Eccl. Hist. S. 9.

Setting them therefore aside, I shall consider what force there is in these Reasons as they are levell'd against the *Revelation*. And I must say, that, if they have any strength in them, they may as well be urg'd to prove the Prophecy of *Jeremy* and the *Lamentations* were not wrote by the same Person. For in the former, the Prophet often Names himself, which he does not once in the latter; and the difference of Expression seems every jot as great between these two Pieces, as it is between them we are now considering.

Neither is it any wonder to find the same Person (as Dr. *Cave* observes in another case) vastly to alter and vary his Style, according to the Times when, or the Persons to whom, or the Subjects about which, he Writes; or the Temper
and

and disposition he is in, when he Writes, or the Care, that is us'd in doing it. So that it is Evident, nothing certain can in this case be infer'd from that Particular.

To the Authority of *Dionysius* and his Reasons too, we oppose the Judgment of many of the Ancients, who were of another Opinion. The Arguments he urges, were obvious to them as well as him. They knew what difference there was between the Style of the other Pieces of *St. John* and the *Revelation*; they knew, that in one, the Writers Name was several times mention'd and not at all in the other; and yet concluded there was no force in these Arguments, concluded notwithstanding them, that all the Pieces were Wrote by the same Author, even the Apostle, of which they could easily receive information as being remov'd at so little a distance from his time. Two of them seem to have been Born soon after, if not before his Death.

Let us hear therefore what may be alledg'd on the other side. (1.) The Author of the *Revelation* (e) tells us himself, that he was Banish'd to the Isle of *Patmos*, for the Word of God, and the Testimony of Jesus. Now that this was the case of *St. John* the Apostle, we have the Witness of (f) *Tertullian*, (g) *Clemens* of *Alexandria*, (h) *Origen*, (i) *Eusebius*, (j) *Jerome*, &c. (2.) We have the expres Testimonies of the Ancients, that the Apostle, (and not another *John*) was he who Wrote the *Revelation*. This is affirm'd by (k) *Justin Martyr*, by *Origen*, by *Tertullian*. *Clemens* indeed of *Alexandria*, attributes it simply to *St. John*, without any addition, but then Mr. D. himself owns (Sect. 20.)

(e) c. i. v.

9.

(f) Of Pre-

script. c. 36

[g] in Eu-

seb. Hist.

l. 3. c. 23.

[h] Com.

on St. Mar.

G. I. p. 417.

[i] l. 3. c.

18.

[j] In Eccl.

Writers in

John.

[k] See all

the above

Sect. XI.

o.) that it is evident by the Circumstances of the Relation in *Eusebius* l. 3. c. 23. that the Apostle, and no other, is design'd by him. *Irenæus* frequently cites it under the Name (l) of *John the Disciple of the Lord*, which is the very Expression he uses when he (m) speaks of the Apostle; and he tells us also, that he who saw those Visions, was the Disciple (n) which lay in our Saviours Bosom, which was the Apostle too. And he again informs us (l. 5. c. 30.) that he had the Explication of a passage there mention'd, from those who convers'd with St. John the Author; and they certainly could and would tell him, which of the *Johns* it was. And therefore since he, besides all the others before-mention'd, fixes it on the Apostle, it is, I think, an unanswerable Argument, that he, and not the Presbyter, is the Person to whom it ought to be ascrib'd.

(l) l. 4. c. 37. and 50.
l. 5. c. 26.
(m) l. 2. c. 39. l. 3. c. 1, and 18.
(n) l. 4. c. 37.

I now return to our Author, who tells us that the Passage he cited from Mr. D. will furnish those who have an inclination to Write on this Subject with many curious disquisitions, wherein to show their Penetration and Judgment. It was not my own Inclination, but the design of serving an Honourable Person to whom I am much oblig'd, which drew me to Write upon this Subject, neither do I pretend to a greater share of Penetration and Judgment than my Neighbours; but yet I shall venture to say, that I think it is no great presumption to undertake the difficulties which are here propos'd by our Author, nor any mighty task to Answer them.

XXVI. The first difficulty is, *How (o) the immediate*
 (o) p. 79. *Successors and Disciples of the Apostles could so*
grossly confound the Genuine Writings of their
Masters with such as were falsely attributed to them.
 To this I reply, that it does not appear to me,
 that they ever did (grossly, or not grossly)
 mistake any Spurious Pieces for the Genuine
 Writings of the Apostles. They have indeed
 a few Passages (of which more in the proper
 Place) that do not occur in our Bibles, but
 that they were taken from Books *Publish'd under*
the Names of the Apostles, and which they judg'd
to have been really the Apostles Works, will puzzle
 our Author, with all his Learning about him,
 to make out. But if the thing had happen'd,
 and some subtle Sophister had so far impos'd
 upon *Clemens, Ignatius*, and the rest, by coun-
 terfeiting their Instructors Hands and Styles,
 as to put a false Epistle or Gospel upon them
for a while, (of which I am not sensible,) this
 would not have been so wonderful a thing, as
 we are made to believe, since even *Seriveners*
 and *Merchants*, those cunning Masters of de-
 fence, have yet been trick'd after this man-
 ner.

However I shall readily yield, that (whether
 the Apostolick Persons just now mention'd
 were so impos'd on or no, and I believe they
 were not, yet) many of that Age, might and
 probably were deceiv'd, for some time, with
 Supposititious Writings, usher'd into the World,
 under the Title of great Names. And this con-
 cession will make room for our Author's second
 difficulty.

(p) Since

(p) *Since they were in the dark, how came others after them to a better light?* Before I give an answer to this question, I cannot but remark, that it comes very oddly from our Author, who pretends to make such discoveries, and undertakes to prove those Pieces full of Ignorance and Supertition, which had been generally well esteem'd till his days. Do you think, Sir, there was never an *I. T.* among the Ancients? None that could smell out an Imposture, or by making a few remarks and asking a few questions, find that a Book was ascrib'd to a wrong Author? You may think thus if you please, and value your self as much as you can upon the account of your great Atchievements; but I believe others are of Opinion, that, if the Fathers had gone your untoward way to work, and dealt no fairer, when they were in quest of Forgeries, then you have done with the Evidences in relation to the *Eikon Basilike*; many of those cheats might have remain'd longer in credit, which yet *they* quickly flung out of doors, only by the assistance of a little Reason, Honesty, and common Sense. We had an instance of this nature among us at the beginning of the late Revolution. Three Declarations were then Publish'd in the Name of the Prince of *Orange*, and esteem'd his for some time by the whole Nation. But upon a strict examination of the matter, the *Third* was found Supposititious, disown'd by the pretended Author, (q) and acknowledg'd by all to be a Forgery. And thus it was in the Primitive times. Some indeed of the Pieces which appear'd in the Apostles Names, seem to have been so contrary

XXVII.

(p) p. 79.

(q) *History of the Devotion*, p. 89.

to their Doctrin, that they quickly sunk and were rejected on all hands. But others, being of a more skilful composition, preserv'd their Reputation for a longer time, and were esteem'd by such as knew no better, for the Monuments of them, whose Names they carried in their front. However these, by comparing them with their Genuine Writings, or enquiring of the Apostles, or those who convers'd with and were instructed by them, had their Glorious Vizours pluck'd off and were expos'd as Impostures. But this could not be done so soon as the Third Declaration was unmask'd here. It was a single Piece ascrib'd to a single Person, and scatter'd abroad no further then the compass of a narrow Island, and therefore Application might in a few days be made to the Prince, as it was, and the cheat, by that means, speedily lay'd open. Whereas in the case, concerning which we are now discoursing, the Forgeries were *many*, they were attributed to *several Persons*, and spread abroad over *different Places* of the Christian Church, so that it must necessarily require a considerable time, before they could be sufficiently examin'd, before the pretended Authors, or those acquainted with them, could be consulted. But at last Truth prevail'd, and all the Impostures of the first and also of the second Age, when they afterwards appear'd were (as we learn from Ecclesiastical Story) found out to be what they really were, and as such slighted and generally undervalued. Though still, after the cheat was expos'd, Learned Men us'd them upon occasion, and quoted such single Passages out of them, as they thought might be of value,
and

and Pertinent to the designs upon which they were Writing.

I proceed now to our Authors third difficult- XXVIII.
ty, (r) *Why all those Books, which are cited by* (r) p. 79.
Clemens and the rest, should not be accounted
equally Authentick. Whoever Reads this Pass-
age, and does not understand the case, will, I
believe, be apt to imagine that the Fathers
here refer'd to, quote many Books that have
Relation to the state of things under the Gos-
pel, some of which we do, upon their Autho-
rity, admit for Canonical, while we reject
others, that are equally cited by them, as Spu-
rious.

How far we make use of these Fathers for
settling the Canon, has been above explain'd.
It's manifest from what is there say'd, (s) that (s) *See*
we employ them, only (in conjunction with XXI.
others) to assert the Title of three or four
Pieces. So many they expressly Name and a-
scribe to their proper Authors, and thereby
teach us that they were compos'd by the A-
postles, and consequently ought to be reckon'd
as Wrote by Inspiration, and of Divine Au-
thority. We infer nothing from them to
justify the rest, but support them by other Evi-
dence.

Well, but ought not the Testimony of these
Fathers be allow'd in behalf of other Pieces,
which they quote, and transfer them from the
Rank of Spurious, wherein they are now plac'd
by some, to that of Canonical Writings?
Why, truly, much might be done, if we *knew*
what the Books were, and that they design'd to quote
them as the Genuine Writings of the Apostles. But

this is our unhappiness (of which our Author seems not to have been sensible, though he has undertaken, upon occasion, to blast the credit of all these Pieces together) that though *Clemens* has quoted three, *Ignatius* as many, and *Barnabas* seven or eight short Passages, that do not occur in our Books of Scripture,, yet they neither give us the Name of the *Treatise*, nor yet of the *Author*, whence they produce them, and how, without that, the Books or the Authors should be put into the Canon, I can't imagine.

However, I love to deal fairly, and shall own that one of the Passages, which we find in (t) *Ep. to the Smyrneans* p. 2. *Ignatius*, is said to have been found in the Gospel according to the *Hebrews*; which is the same with that of the *Nazarens*. So it may be, but *Ignatius* does not quote it from thence. He might have it from other Books besides that, or receive it from Tradition, or take it upon Memory. The Words in *Ignatius* are, *Handle me, and feel me, and see that I am not an Incorporeal † Spirit or Apparition*. In (u) St. Luke we Read, *Handle me and see, for a Spirit hath not Flesh and Bones, as ye see me have*. The Sense is exactly the same in both, and if the Father made the quotation, without looking into the Book, he might easily mistake as far as this comes to.

† I render the Greek (*Ψαυόμενον*) Spirit or Apparition, because one of those Words is always us'd by the *English* to express the same thing, which is here intended by the *Greek*.

But what, if we grant our Author all he can desire, and should yield that this Passage was taken by *Ignatius* out of the Gospel according to the *Hebrews*, (which will never be prov'd,) what can he infer from thence? That we shall easily see, if we compare this with those places, where Texts taken out of the Gospels and Epistles have been mention'd by these Writers. We find, for Instance, that *St. Clemens* gives us several Passages that are to be met with, in the Epistle to the *Hebrews*, that *St. Ignatius* also gives us one or two, that are in the Gospel according to *St. Matthew* or the Epistle to the *Corinthians*. All that we argue from hence, is, that those Books, from which these two Fathers borrow those Passages, were then extant and abroad in the Church. But we cannot, we do not hence infer, that they were Canonical or Wrote by those Apostles, whose Names they now bear; because neither *Clemens* nor *Ignatius* tell us so, and therefore that must be Learn'd from other Authors. In like manner, supposing that *Ignatius* took the expression we are now considering, from the Gospel according to the *Hebrews*, all we can gather from thence, is, that there was such a Gospel then extant, wherein that passage was Read. But that it was of Divine Authority, or Wrote by any of the Apostles, we cannot gather, for *St. Ignatius* says no such thing; we must learn that, if it can be learn'd, from other Writers. Since then we allow as much Authority to this Father in one case, as we do to him or *St. Clemens* in the other, certainly our Author can desire no more, and therefore I suppose we are agreed as to this matter.

But perhaps it may be Objected, that if we grant this, we grant that St. Ignatius quoted a Spurious Gospel. To this I answer, (1.) That the question before us at present, is not, whether this Father quoted a Spurious Gospel or no, but whether, by borrowing a Passage after this manner, from the Gospel according to the *Hebrews*, he advances it into the Canon. The contrary to which I have plainly prov'd to be true. (2.) This Gospel, with the additions, ought not to be look'd upon as Spurious or a Forgery, but rather as a Piece of Ecclesiastical History. See above at the end of Section XVI.

And if we proceed to *Hermas*, it must be owned that he produces not one Text (that we can be sure of) out of either the *Old* or *New Testament*; but quotes one short Sentence out of an *Apocryphal* Book, call'd the *Prophecies of Eldad and Medad*. And therefore since we make no manner of use of this Writer for the Establishing the Canon, we cannot be oblig'd by our Authors Argument to embrace this *Apocryphal* Piece upon his Authority. Only I shall add, that the Passage is good and true, whosoever say'd it, *The Lord is nigh unto all those, who turn unto him*; and therefore might be quoted, not upon the Authority of the Book, but the Intrinsic Value of the Expression, which may be cited without danger, from the Mouth or Pen of the greatest Impostor.

And thus I have answer'd our Author's third difficulty, why all the Books, which are cited by *Clemens* and the rest should not be equally Authentic; and shown, that there is but one single Piece, that we count Supposititious, quoted by
Name,

Name, and that too, not referring to the time of the *New but Old Testament*; and quoted it is by an Author of whose Testimony we make no use in settling the Canon, and therefore we cannot be tied and bound by it in the case of this pretended Prophecy; neither indeed ought any one else. For he is alone in the matter (as far as appears at present,) and contradicts the whole *Jewish Church*, who knew nothing of this Book nor ever admitted it among their Canonical Writings. As for the Passage of *Ignatius*, pretended to be borrowed from the Gospel according to the *Hebrews*, I hope, what has been above say'd, is satisfactory; and for the rest, in him and *Clemens* and *Barnabas*, when our Author shall please to tell us, *whence they were fetch'd, and under what notion they are quoted*, he shall hear more of my mind.

Polycarp has not one Passage out of any Spurious or unknown Writer that I can find, and therefore I suppose he may be dismiss'd without further trouble.

The last difficulty, is (a) *What stress should be lay'd on the Testimony of those Fathers, who not only contradict one another, but are often inconsistent with themselves in the relations of the very same facts.* XXIX. (a) p. 80.

Here, I think, our Author's Expression is obscure. He does not tell us, whom he means by *Fathers*, or *what Contradictions* (as he calls them) he had more especially in his Eye, when he Wrote these Words. I was once about venturing to guess, but upon Second Thoughts forbore, lest I should be censur'd as severely as Mr. *Bl.* was, for mistaking (or too well understanding)

(b) p. 81. standing) his meaning, and be told, that I am one of those, (b) *who are Sagacious enough to discover the hidden Poyson of every Word, and will be sure to give loud warning of the danger, to shew where the Snake lies in the Grass, and to tell what's in the Belly of the Trojan Horse.* And therefore, that I may avoid such a dreadful Thunder-clap, shall say no more, but that he's in the Clouds, and there I must leave him for the present.

Postscript.

Postscript.

There are two or three Passages, which would not fall in regularly with the Foregoing Discourse, without too much breaking the Coherence, therefore I shall consider them here.

The first is, what we Read, (p. 37. n. 6.) XXX. and is in the following Words, *We need not produce our Authors for the Canons and Constitutions of the Apostles, since so many Learned Members of the Church of England have Written large Volumes to prove 'em Genuine.* Now this directly overthrows what has been asserted at the beginning of these Papers. For if the Genuine Works of the Apostles, and such as were Authoriz'd by them, make up the Code of the *New Testament*, why should not these Constitutions and Canons partake of the same honour too, since our Author tells us, they are asserted Genuine by many Learned Members of the Church of *England* in large Volumes, Wrote for that very end and purpose? To which I shall reply no more at present, but only this, that I was much surpriz'd at this assertion of our Author. For I thought I had known, so far at least, what *most* of the Learned Men of our Church, whether Living or Dead, have deliver'd

deliver'd in this matter, as that *large Treatises* of many of them upon this Subject had not escap'd me; and I thought too, that I had understood so much of the merits of the cause, as to give me reason to believe, that very few impartial and understanding Persons were like to maintain what our Author says they do in the case, and therefore was ready, without any farther debate, to pronounce him mistaken. But because I was unwilling he should charge (c) p. 54. me, as he does Mr. B. (c) *with making my own Reading and Knowledge the measure of Truth,* (who had too been retir'd from the Publick Stations of Learning for many years together,) I resolv'd to enquire of such as I thought could inform me, whether any thing had been lately (or formerly) Publish'd, which might justify our Author's affirmation. But I soon found that they knew no more in the matter then my self; and therefore I shall desire I. T. at his leisure, to acquaint the World † *who those many Learned Members of the Church of England are, that have Written large Volumes to prove the Constitutions and Canons, we are now considering, and*

† To prevent all cavilling, I here own (what I observ'd many years ago) that there is one Learned Writer of our Church, who does upon occasion speak as favourably of the *Constitutions*, as *Turrian* the Jesuite himself could do, who Wrote a Book in defence of them. But then I must add, that he gives us no Reasons for his Opinion, and what he says, is comprehend'd within the compass of a few lines. And I am sure, that a *single Person* and *two or three Sentences*, can, by no Logick, be multiplied into *many Members* and *large Volumes*.

as we now have them, to be the Genuine Works of the Apostles.

There is another Passage of our Author (d) XXXI. where he ridicules *Ireneus*, as having argued (d) p. 50, very fillily concerning the number of the Gos- 51. pels. To give a large account of the matter would be tedious and impertinent (since the whole thing is a meer Cavil,) and therefore I shall only remark briefly,

(1.) That our Author grossly wrongs *Ireneus* in his *Latin* quotation. For the Father having (l. 3. c. 9, 10. and part of the 11th.) argued against the Hereticks of those times from the four Gospels, adds, that these Gospels were receiv'd, one or other of them, by the Hereticks themselves, and therefore his argument from them was strong and true. These last words our Author parts from the rest of the Sentence to which they belong and tacks them to what follows, as if *Ireneus* had say'd, the Argument for the four Gospels from the four Regions is firm and strong; whereas (whatever he might think) he does not say so.

(2.) Neither does he say afterward, that they are vain and unlearn'd and bold, who reject the number of the four Gospels, thus prov'd from the four Regions, &c. (as our Author represents him,) but those who reject the things, which he judg'd were foresignified as the subject of the several Gospels ('tis *Speciem Evangelij*, and *Personas Evangelij*,) by the four Faces in the Cherubim of *Ezekiel*, that is (as he tells us) the
Humanity,

Humanity, the Prophetical and Priestly Offices, and Divinity of our Saviour.

(3.) After all, the Father does not pretend to prove from the four Quarters or the four Winds, that *the Gospels we have were Wrote by those Persons whose Names they bear* : For that he Learn'd from such as convers'd with the Writers themselves, as was above-observ'd. Neither does he pretend to prove from thence *that the Gospels were Canonical or Rules of Faith* ; for that depends (e) upon their being Wrote or Authoriz'd by the Apostles ; so that the merits of the cause under debate are not in the least concern'd in the Argument. All that he pretends to, is, that as there were Four Principal Quarters of the World, &c. and no more, so God would have it that there should be four Gospels in the World and no more ; and did think fit to fore-signify, the *Temper* of the Writers, and the *Subject* of each Book by the *four Faces* in *Ezekiel's Cherubim*. Now what though there seems to be more of *Fancy* then *Solidity*, more of *Plausible Allusion* then *close Reasoning* in this way of Arguing, yet I don't see why our Author should so much insult upon the Father for it, since Instances of the like Nature may be found in Eminent Writers of all Professions, and Heathens as well as Christians. If we make it our business to *Weed* Books, which are otherwise Learned and Rational, and pick out the Weakest Expressions we can find in them, we shall proceed very unjustly, and I doubt, that very few, if this method be us'd, will escape Censure.

(e) See above p. 7.

I did not think to have say'd any thing to our Authors Reflection (f) on the Epistle of St. *Barnabas*, because I am not concern'd, at present, whether it be Genuine or no. But observing that he designs to improve the Expression he fetches thence to the Prejudice of the Christian Religion, I thought my self oblig'd to add a few lines upon that occasion. The Words in the Original are thus, *Christ chose for his Apostles — those who were the greatest of Sinners, that he might show, how he came to call, not the Righteous but Sinners to Repentance.* We have little or no account in the Scripture of the Apostles Morals, before they were chosen by our Saviour, and therefore we'll, for the present, let this Passage of *Barnabas* go for true. What will follow? Nothing else, as far as I see, but that our Lord was an Excellent Physician of Souls, who wrought so perfect and Effectual a cure upon Men in such a dangerous condition, and brought them to a true Sense of Piety and Religion, for the Encouragement of others to Repent and Reform. Ay, but if they were once such, (g) *this would Rob us of an Argument, we draw from their Integrity and Simplicity, against Infidels.* Would it so indeed? Methinks now this is very strange, and does not conclude so well, as the Argument of *Irenaeus* from the four Winds, with which we see what a stir our Author made, a little before. For may not a Wicked Man prove good, and may he not give us such Evidences of the Sincerity of his Reformation, that we are bound in Justice to believe him? Let us examine the case

XXXII.

(f) p. 44.

45.

(g) p. 45.

case a little, and see what Arguments can be produc'd for the uprightness and integrity of the Apostles after their Conversion. They Preach'd a most Excellent and Holy Religion over all the World, and endeavour'd to bring People every where to the Belief and Practice of it. And that they were in good earnest in all their undertakings, and did not act a part for carrying on any Worldly design, is apparent from hence, that they *knowingly and willingly* expos'd themselves to Pains, to Troubles, to Losses, to Contempt, to Persecutions, to Torments, to Death it self. This, I think, is sufficient to show, that they really believ'd what they affirm'd, concerning the Doctrine, Works and Resurrection of our Saviour; that they did not design to put a Trick upon Mankind in the Relations, they gave thereof, since they readily expos'd themselves to such Sufferings for the asserting of it. And that they asserted nothing but what was true, God himself did also further attest, by the Miracles he enabled them to work, of which we have uncontrollable proof, as has been so often observ'd by others that I need not to insist upon it here. So that though we do suppose the *Épistle* of St. *Barnabas* to be Genuine, and the Passage quoted from it to be really true, yet it is plain nothing can be thence inferr'd to prove our Religion false or ill grounded.

Since

Since the finishing this, * I thought it advisable, for the preventing Doubts or Cavils, to subjoyn the Testimonies of *Ireneus* and *Tertullian*, for those Books of Scripture which belong to that, we above call'd *The first Canon*. I begin with *Ireneus*. XXXIII.

In his Third Book and (b) first Chapter, he expressly asserts the four Evangelists by Name to be the Authors of the four Gospels. And particularly, he attributes that, which goes under his Name, to St. *Matthew*, (i) (l. 3. c. 18.) St. *Mark's*, to him ((k) l. 3. c. 18.) that of St. *Luke*, to him, ((l) l. 3. c. 11.) and St. *John's*, to that Apostle ((m) l. 3. c. 11.) (h) p. 229. (i) p. 275. (k) p. 276. (l) p. 254. (m) p. 257.

He asserts the Acts of the Apostles to have been Wrote by St. *Luke* the (n) Evangelist (l. 3. c. 14, 15.) and attributes all the following Epistles to St. *Paul*, in the following Places. (n) p. 271. 273.

The Epistle to the *Romans* — l. 2. c. 38. p. 190

The first to the *Corinthians* — l. 1. c. 1. p. 33

Second to the *Corinth.* — l. 3. c. 7. p. 248

* I was perswaded by a Friend to add the ensuing Catalogue from *Ireneus* and *Tertullian*, to which I easily agreed, as having made the Collection many years ago, when I Read those Fathers, for my own Satisfaction. The Edition of *Tertullian* that I us'd; was Printed at Paris 1669, and that of *Ireneus* is pretended, in the Title Page, to be Printed there too, 1675.

The Epistle to the *Galatians*——l.3. c.7. *ibid.*
 to the *Ephesians*——l.5. c.14. p.455
 to the *Philippians* ——l.4. c.34. p.363
 to the *Colossians* ——l.3. c.14. p.271

The first to the *Thessalonians*---l.5. c.6. p. 442
 Second to the *Thessal.* ——l.3. c.7. p.249

The first to *Timothy*—— ——l.2. c.19. p.172
 (and Pref. p. 3.
 Second to *Timothy*——l.3. c.14. p.271

The Epistle to *Titus* ——l.3. c.3. p. 233

To St. *Peter* he ascribes the first Epistle,
 which goes under his Name, (l.4. c.22. (o))---
 (o) p. 338. to St. *John* the Apostle, his first Epistle (l. 3.
 (p) p. 277. c. 18. (p))

There are several other Places (I may say
 numerous, for most of them) where these
 Books are ascrib'd to those Writers, whose
 Names they now bear; but I thought one Testi-
 mony sufficient to Evince what Opinion *Ireneus*
 had of each Book. And I shall use the same
 method as to *Tertullian*.

He assigns the four Gospels to the four *Evan-*
gelists, by whose Names they are call'd, (l. 4.
 against *Marcion* c. 2. and 5. p. 414. and 416.)

The Acts of }
 the Apost. } *Treatise of Fasting* c. 10. p. 549
 to St. *Luke*. }

The following Epistles are attributed to St. Paul, in the following Places.

The Epist. to the Romans--Scorpiace c. 13. p. 498

The first and second Epist. } Of Chastity. c. 13, 14. p. 564, 565
to the Corinthians

The Epist. } l. 5. against Marcion c. 2. p. 462
to the Galatians.

to the } Of the Resur. }
Ephesians. } of the Flesh. } c. 40. p. 349

to the Philippians — ib. c. 23. p. 339

to the Colossians — ib. p. 338

The first and second }
Epistles to the } — ib. c. 24. p. 339
Thessalonians.

The first to Tim.-- against Praxeas c. 15. p. 509

The second } Of the Resurrecti- }
to Timothy } on of the Flesh. } c. 23. p. 339

The Epist. to Titus -- Of Prescription c. 6. p. 204

The first of St. Peter, is quoted as his; Scorpiace c. 12. p. 497.

And so likewise the first of St. John — against Praxeas c. 15. p. 508.

Those of the Seven Controverted Pieces, which are quoted by either of these Fathers, don't properly

properly belong to this place, and are mention'd above (*Sect. XI.*) What ground we have to insert the *Epistle of St. Paul to Philemon*, in the number of those Writings, which were never disputed, see before (*Sect. IV.*)

(q) See
Sect. II.

From what has been here produc'd, it is evident that these two Fathers attributed all the Books above-mention'd, to those Persons, by whom we now think they were Wrote, and (q) consequently esteem'd them Canonical.

XXXIV

(r) l. 3. c.
25.
(s) In the
places cited
above *Sect.*
IV.

And that the whole Catholick Church in their days was of the same Opinion, is evident from the Testimonies of (r) *Eusebius* and (s) *Gregory Nazianzen*, who reckon these Books as those which were never question'd. And so much may we learn likewise from these two Fathers, now under consideration, in the passages refer'd to above, (p. 36. and 78.) part of which it may not be impertinent to set down here at large.

(t) l. 4. c.
63.

Ireneus tells us, (t) that true Knowledge consists in understanding the Doctrine of the Apostles and the Ancient state of the Church in the whole World, according to the Succession of the Bishops, to whom they consign'd the care of the Church in every Place, which has been continued

continued down to our times, † and a complete Body of the Scripture preserv'd, without either Forgery or Falsification, without either Addition or Substraction, &c. Which Words are an express assertion, that the Doctrine and Discipline and Scriptures which they then had, were the same which the Apostles deliver'd, and were then receiv'd in all Churches of the World, with which Irenæus and the Gauls had any Communication.

Tertullian (u) appeals to all the Apostolick Churches, to the Galatians, to the Thessalonians, to the Romans, to the Colossians, to the Ephesians, &c. and, in a word, to all the Churches which joyn'd in Communion with them, to prove the Copy of St. Luke, which the Catholics had (and not that of Marcion) to be Genuine and Sincere. He adds too, that the same Authority will justify the other three Gospels likewise, since they were receiv'd (x) from, and according to, the Copies of those Churches. (y) He produces, in another place, Testimonies from several Epistles of St. Paul, from St. Peter and St. John, and then for further confirmation of the Truth of what he urges (z) exhorts those who had a mind to exercise their Curiosity in the business of their Salvation, to run over the Churches planted by these and the other

(u) l. 4.
against
Marcion
c. 5.

(x) Per
illas & se-
cundum
illas.
(y) Of Pre-
script. c.
33, 34.
(z) c. 36.

† I render (*translationem plenissimam*) a complete Body or Treatise; because it can signify nothing else here; though the Expression in the *Latine* is not very proper. But he that Translated this Work of Irenæus out of *Greek*, did not understand the Propriety of the *Latin* Tongue, and has hundreds of Expressions more barbarous and improper than this.

(a) *Authentic
litera.*

(b) c. 37.
p. 215.

Apostles, where they might find * *their Authentick Writings* (or Letters) still remaining, (a) expressing the Doctrine and representing the Piety of each of them. A little after he brings in the Catholick Church thus arguing with the Hereticks concerning the Scripture,--- (b) Who are you? When and whence came you hither? What do you in my ground, since you belong not to me? By what Right, O *Marcion*, do you cut down my Woods? What Authority have you, *Valentinus*, to turn the Course of my Fountains? Who gave you Power, *Apelles*, to overthrow my Fences? What do you Sowing and Feeding here at your Pleasures? *The Possession is mine, I have enjoy'd it for a long time, I first enjoy'd it. I derive a certain Original from the Authors themselves,*

* *Rigaltius* and after him, *F. Simon*, will have no more meant here by *Authentick Letters or Writings*, then that what the Apostles Wrote was still preserv'd in the *Original Language*, in those Places. But I would fain know what great matter there was in that. The Epistles were first Wrote in *Greek*, and were without question still Extant in *Greek* (not only in the Apostolick, but) in all those Churches, to which that Language remain'd still familiar, if not in others too. *Tertullian* certainly design'd something *Singular and Peculiar* to the Churches planted by the Apostles, when he say'd their Authentick Letters or Writings were kept there, and consequently must intend the *very Originals* of them. And why these two Learned Men should judge otherwise (since this is the most natural, though not the only, Sense of the Word) I cannot guess. For 'tis certain, Manuscripts have been preserv'd many hundred years longer then the time was, which pass'd between the Apostles and the days of *Tertullian*.

whose

whose it was. *I am the Heir of the Apostles, &c.*
Thus Write *Ireneus* and *Tertullian* concerning
the Scriptures of the *New Testament*; and what
they thus Write certainly concerns all those Books,
which they held for *Genuine and Pure*, in opposi-
tion to the Hereticks of their Times. These,
they tell us, were deriv'd from the Apostles,
by the hands of those Churches, which they
founded all over the World; them they pro-
duce for their Vouchers in the present case:
and appeal likewise to the Doctrine embrac'd
in every one of them, which was very conso-
nant to the Books of the Catholics, but not to
those of the Hereticks.

Thus much we may easily learn from *Ireneus*,
He tells us, (c) That the several sorts of Here- (c) l. 1. c.
ticks, with which he had to do, had forg'd a ^{17.}
great number of *Apocryphal and Spurious Pieces*.
These without question, contain'd the Principles
of their Doctrine, and were sent abroad into
the World as the chief Grounds and Foundati-
ons of what they taught. But all was Cheat
and Coufenance, and the Fictions of their own
Brains. What they vented, was Heretical and
Erroneous, as this Father proves at large from
hence, (d) that it was contrary to the Faith, (d) l. 3. c.
which the Apostles had planted in all places, ^{3, 4.}
and which had been learnt, and might be learnt
every day, from the Churches founded by them.
And again in another Place (li) he rejects some (li) l. 3. c.
Gospels of the *Valentinians*, because they con- ^{11. p. 259.}
tain'd Blasphemies, and Doctrines contrary to
those which had been Publish'd by the Apostles.
So likewise *Tertullian* speaks of some of the
same Hereticks — (e) Let their Doctrine be (e) of Pre-
I 4 compar'd ^{script. c.} 32. p. 213

compar'd with the Apostles and we shall quickly see by the contrariety thereof, that it proceeds neither from any of them nor their Disciples. The Apostles did not contradict one another, neither did their Disciples contradict them. The Churches, which they founded agree in the same Doctrines, and so do those too, which being of a later Original, deriv'd their Instruction from them which were planted before them; and therefore may be call'd Apostolical as well as they, because owning and embracing the same Faith. Let the Hereticks show that they deserve that Title upon either of these accounts, that these Churches acknowledge the same Doctrine which they do, and receive them to Peace and Communion as Brethren. But

(f) c. 38.
p. 216.

this they cannot do. — (f) They are Forreigners, they are Enemies to the Apostles, because they teach a different Faith. — And since their Faith is so different, we may be sure they have adulterated the Scriptures. For they, who were resolv'd to teach preversly, were under a necessity of corrupting those Books, upon which their Doctrine was to be grounded. — Whereas we, who preserve the Doctrine entire, have preserv'd the Books so too, without changing or adding or taking away. — We teach nothing but what was to be found in the Scriptures from the beginning, before they were corrupted and interpolated. — Before *Marcion* had lay'd violent hands upon them, employing a Knife and not a Style, and cutting away whatever he thought convenient and was contrary

contrary to his Errors and Heresies. — (g) (g) c. 19.
 † For where the Truth of the Christian Faith
 and Doctrine appears, there the Genuine and
 true Copies of the Scripture are certainly to be
 found.

Thus far I proceeded in the former Edition;
 and though I (h) then intimated, that Testi- (h) p. 14.
 monies might easily be produced from *Clemens*
of Alexandria, Origen, and Cyprian, to the same
 purpose with those (i) above alledg'd out of (i) p. 13.
Ireneus and Tertullian, yet I did not judge it 113, &c.
 necessary to insert them at that time; as sup-
 posing the Evidences, which I had actually in-
 sisted upon, sufficient. But considering after-
 wards with my self, and being told also by o-
 thers, whom I consulted in the case, that the
 addition of these might prove of use and Satis-
 faction to some Readers, I have here (after
 comparing them afresh with the Originals)
 transcrib'd such References, as seem'd most
 serviceable to my design, and dispos'd them in
 the following order.

Clemens of Alexandria attributes the Gospel
 which goes under the Name of *St. Matthew* to
 that Apostle ((k) *Stromat. l. 1. p. 341.*) — (k) Edit.
St. Mark's, to him (*Treatise of the Salvation of G.L. Paris*
the Rich, Sect. 5. p. 16. of the Oxford Edition) 1641.
 — *St. Luke's*, to him (*Stromat. l. 1. p. 340.*)
 and *St. John's*, to that Evangelist (*Pedag. l. 1.*
p. 100.)

† Ubi apparuerit esse veritatem & disciplina & fidei
 Christianæ, illic erit & veritas Scripturarum.

The

The Canon of the

The *Acts of the Apostles* he ascribes to St. Luke
(*Stromat. l. 5. p. 588.*)

He cites the following Epistles as St. Paul's,
in the places here set down.

The Epistle to the *Romans*, *Pedag. l. 1. p. 117*

The First Epistle }
to the *Corin-* ——— *Pedag. l. 1. p. 96*
thians.

The Second Epistle ——— *Stromat. l. 3. p. 456*

The Epistle to the *Galatians*, *Pedag. l. 1. p. 95*

The Epistle to the *Ephesians*, *Pedag. l. 1. p. 88*

The Epistle to the *Philippians*, *Ped. l. 1. p. 107*

The Epistle to the *Colossians*, *Stromat. l. 6. p. 645*

The First Epistle }
to the *Thessa-* ——— *Pedag. l. 1. p. 88, 89*
lonians.

The Second Epistle ——— *Strom. l. 5. p. 554*

The First E- }
pistle to ——— *Admon. to the Gent. p. 55*
Timothy.

The Second to *Timothy* ——— *ibid p. 56*

The Epistle to *Titus* ——— *Stromat. l. 1. p. 299*

The

The First Epistle of St. Peter, is ascrib'd to that Apostle, (*Pedag. l. 1. p. 103.*) — and the First of St. John, to him (*Strom. l. 2. p. 389.*)

I acknowledge that in the Places above-mention'd, where this Father quotes the Epistle to the *Ephesians*, and the Second to the *Thessalonians*, he does not particularly name St. Paul, but only makes use of a General Expression, *The Apostle* says or Writes—— But I desire the Reader to consider (1.) That the Phrase, *the Apostle*, is commonly us'd by most Writers, in the way of Eminency, to denote St. Paul, and *Clemens* himself employs it for that purpose, at every turn. (2.) It's most certain, that the Father (unless he had told us the contrary) can mean no other Apostle, but him, whose Name is prefix'd to each of these Epistles, and that, we all know, is St. Paul's.

From St. *Clemens of Alexandria* we pass to his Scholar, *Origen*, and might easily have been satisfy'd at one view, what Opinion he entertain'd of the several Pieces of the *New Testament*, if all his Works were still preserv'd. For, as (1) *Epiphanius* tells us, he Wrote Expositions on the whole Scripture. But, though the greatest part of his Writings are now Perish'd, partly through the envy, and partly through the carelesness of succeeding Ages, yet there are enough of them remaining to acquaint us with his Judgment in this matter. His Commentaries and Homilies upon some Books are still Extant, and I have already (m) observ'd, (m) *See. VII.* that he reckons up the Canonical Writings of the *New Testament* just as we do in the Church of

(1) *Heref. 64. Sect. 3.*

of *England*. But however, to give the Reader all reasonable satisfaction, I shall direct him to some express places in his Works, where all those Pieces, whereof we are now treating, are quoted as the Genuine Writings of those, to whom we at this day ascribe them. And for his greater ease, I shall fetch the main of my Testimonies from the *Treatise against Celsus*, and the *Philocalia* (*Cambr. Edit. G. L.*) which are to be met with everywhere.

He mentions the Gospel of St. *Matthew*, as that Apostle, (*l. 1. against Celsus p. 27.*) — St. *Mark's*, as his (*l. 2. p. 60.*) He ascribes St. *Luke's*, to him (*l. 1. p. 46.*) and St. *John's* to that Disciple (*l. 1. p. 40.*)

He cites the *Acts of the Apostles*, as Written by St. *Luke*, (*l. 6. p. 282.*)

The following Epistles he quotes as St. *Paul's* in the places here produc'd.

The Epistle to the *Romans*, *Philocal. c. 1. p. 10*

The First Epistle to the *Corinthians*—*ibid. p. 9*

The Second Epistle ——— *ib. c. 4. p. 25*

The Epistle }
to the *Gala-* } ——— *l. 2. against Celsus p. 57*
tians.

The Epistle }
to the *Ephe-* } ——— *l. 3. against Celsus p. 122*
sians.

The

The Epistle to the Philippians, —

The Epistle to the Col- — *l. 5. against Celsus p. 236*

The First Epistle to the Thessa- — *l. 2. against Celsus p. 160*

The Second Epistle *l. 6. against Celsus p. 307*

The First Epistle to Ti- — *l. 1. against Celsus p. 49*

The Second Epistle to Ti- — *l. 4. against Celsus p. 210*

The Epistle to Titus — *Tom. 4. on Matth. G. L. p. 362*

The Epistle to Philemon — *Hom. 19. on Jerem. G. L. p. 185*

The First Epistle of St. Peter, is quoted by him as that Apostle's (Tom. 8. on John G. L. p. 126.) — The First Epistle also of St. John, cited as his (Tom. 4. on John G. L. p. 72.)

From Origen we proceed to St. Cyprian, and shall easily perceive, that he too own'd the Books, we have now under debate, as Genuine, by

by the following Places, which I shall offer to the Readers consideration, out of many that might be produc'd. The Edition, to which the Pages referr, is that of Oxford.)

St. Matthew's Gospel is cited by him, as that Evangelists, (l. 1. against the Jews p. 24.) — St. Mark's, as his (l. 3. of Testimonies p. 72.) St. Luke's, as his (l. 2. against the Jews p. 36.) and St. John's is own'd to be that Apostles (l. 1. against the Jews p. 21.

He cites the *Acts of the Apostles* very frequently among the other Books of the *New Testament*, though I have not taken notice, that he any where ascribes that History to St. Luke. But that is not material, since he Names no other Author thereof, it is certain he look'd upon it as Wrote by the same Person to whom all the rest of the Church ever assign'd it. But he does that, which is of greater consequence. For in his *Treatise of Works and Almsdeeds*, he styles a passage (n) produc'd by him, out of this Book, *The Testimony of Truth*, in opposition to the Apocryphal History of *Tobit*, which we had just before allerdg'd. So that (it is apparent) he quoted and made use of the *Acts of the Apostles*; as a Book, which was, in his Judgment, questionless Canonical.

He ascribes the following Epistles to St. Paul, in the Places here allerdg'd.

The Epistle to the Romans l. 3. of Testim. p. 79

The

The First Epistle }
to the *Corin-* } l. 1. against the Jews p. 22
thians.

The Second Epistle ——— *ibid.*

The Epistle }
to the *Ga-* } — l. 2. against the Jews p. 37
latians.

The Epistle to the *Ephesians* ——— *ibid.* p. 48

The Epistle to the *Philippians* ——— *ib.* p. 40

The Epistle }
to the *Co-* } — l. 1. against the Jews p. 23
lossians.

The First Epistle }
to the *Thessa-* } — l. 3. of Testimon. p. 81
lonians.

The Second Epistle ——— *ib.* p. 84

The First Epistle to *Timothy* ——— *ib.* p. 85

The Second Epistle ——— *ib.* p. 84

The Epistle to *Titus* ——— *ib.* p. 89

The First Epistle of St. *Peter*, is quoted as that Apostles, (l. 2. against the Jews p. 48.) and so is also the First Epistle of St. *John*, as his, in the same place.

And

And thus I have directed my Reader, both to the Book and Pages, wherein *Irenæus*, *Tertullian*, *Clemens of Alexandria*, *Origen*, and *Cyprian* (who all flourish'd and Wrote within 150 years after the Death of *St. John*) have own'd the Pieces, whereof I am now discoursing, for Genuine and Authentick. I have also above (*Sett. IV, XI, and XXV.*) produc'd other Evidences for them and for the *Seven Controverted Books*, from divers Primitive Christian Writers; and shall now, before I conclude, pass on to remark what Opinion an Eminent *Heathen*, even *Julian the Apostate* (that bitter and inveterate Enemy of Christianity) entertain'd concerning them. This we may easily learn from what he Wrote and Publish'd against our Holy Religion; which may be seen in Mr. *Spanheim's* Edition of his Works, wherein *St. Cyril's* Answer to the Books of that Emperour; with what remains of the Books themselves, against the Christians is Printed, as it is

(h) l. 10.

p. 327.

(i) l. 8. p.

253.

(k) l. 9. p.

291. l. 10.

p. 335.

(l) l. 8. p.

261, 262.

l. 10. p.

335.

(m) l. 9. p.

314.

(n) l. 9. p.

320. l. 10.

p. 351.

(o) l. 7. p.

245.

(p) Ep. 42.

p. 423.

also in *Cyril's* own Works. There we shall find, that *Julian* expressly mentions the Writings of (b) the Four Evangelists by Name, of *St. Paul* also and *St. Peter*, as their own proper and undoubted Works; that he speaks (i) of the Genealogy of our Saviour, as Recorded by *St. Matthew* and *St. Luke*; that he quotes Passages (k) out of *St. Matthew*, (l) out of *St. John*, (m) out of the *Acts* of the *Apostles*, (n) out of *St. Paul's* Epistle to the *Romans*, and (o) out of the First to the *Corinthians*; and disputes against them. To which may be added, that he speaks of the Writings of *St. Matthew* and *St. Luke* (p) also in his Epistles.

The

The Inferences, which naturally arise from hence, are these two, First, that it was well known among the Heathens, that the Books of the *New Testament*, as embrac'd by the Catholicks, were the Records, upon which the Christian Religion was founded; and accordingly *Julian* sets himself directly to oppose, what was delivered in them, as the most ready way to overthrow and ruin Christianity. Secondly, That there was then no Reason known, why the Books should be suspected, as not really Wrote by those Persons, to whom we ascribe them, or why they should be judg'd to have been chang'd and alter'd by the Catholicks. For if there had been the least probable ground for such an accusation, we may be sure, this Learned and keen Adversary of theirs would not have forgot to lay it to their charge; he would never have cited the Books, as the Genuine Works of *St. John St. Paul, &c.* but affirm'd plainly they were the Forgeries and Contrivances of later times, drawn up, by he knew not whom, to advance the Credit and Reputation of their Master. Since therefore he does nothing of this, but the quite contrary; since he quotes these Pieces as the Writings of the Apostles and Apostolick Men, and never accuses the Christians of Falsifications or Corruptions, we may be certain that he knew of nothing, which could be justly objected against them, as to this Particular.

I would offer the serious consideration of this Instance to the Mighty Discoverers of the present Age. We have here an Emperour, who wanted neither Learning, nor Wit, nor Industry, inflam'd with a most eager desire of running down Christianity; assisted therein, not only with the Writings of *Celsus*, *Porphry*, *Hierocles*, and others, who had engag'd in the same cause before him; but also with the best advice and directions (we may be sure) of *Libanius*, *Jamblichus*, *Maximus*, and the rest of the *Sophists* and *Philosophers*, who flourish'd in his time; who yet, with all these helps, could find no solid Grounds or Reasons for representing the *New Testament* as a Forgery. So far was he from pretending thereto, that, on the contrary, he owns the Books thereof, which he had occasion to mention, for the Genuine Works of those Persons, to whom we attribute them at present, and does not any where declare his suspicions, that either they, or any of the rest, were either forg'd or corrupted by the Catholics. Whereas there are those in our days, who, above Thirteen Hundred years after him, pretend to discover that, which neither he, nor any of the Learned asserters of Heathenism (who doubtless supplied him upon occasion, with their most Curious and Critical Remarks and Observations) could do; and bear the World in hand, that those Ancient Monuments of our Faith, which are ascrib'd to the Evangelists and Apostles, are none of theirs, but the Impostures and Contrivances of designing Men, who have impos'd them upon the
Credulous

Credulous and unthinking part of Mankind. As if *they* had greater means and opportunities of discovering the Forgery at this distance (if there was one) then *Julian* and the zealous maintainers of the *Pagan* Religion had so long ago; or as if all the Christian World, for so many Centuries, (except themselves and a few more,) had been destitute of Integrity and Understanding. But whether the *weakness* or *confidence* of such pretences be greater, I shall leave the Reader to determine.

F I N I S.

THE
BOOKSELLER
TO THE
READER.

HAVING lately received from a Friend of the Learned Mr. Dodwell the Letter hereto Annexed, together with leave for its Publication, and conceiving it to be too Valuable to be suppressed, I have obtained leave of the Reverend Mr. Richardson to subjoyn it to his Vindication of the Canon of the New Testament; and I promise my self thou wilt allow I had Reason so to do.

R. Sare.

Mr.

Mr. *Dodwell's* LETTER.

Good Sir,

THE Principal Cause wherein Mr. *Toland* has concern'd me is the Attestation of the Writings of the *New Testament*. This requires more leisure than I can command at present, and more room than can be allow'd in an Appendix. My Personal concerns I have always thought too frivolous for the Publick to be troubled with them. And I should have done so still if they had gone no farther than my Person, and designed only the Disparagment of that, which is the Case of *Gronovius*. Mr. *Toland* has taken another way of doing me more Injury under a fairer pretence, and of Involving others (for whom I think my self more concern'd in duty than for my self) in the same Injury, that of an Invidious and Odious as well as undeserved comparison with my Betters. I am very sensible how suitable it is to his other treatment of that Holy Order whose Honour I have made it the study of my Life to promote. It is very agreeable to that very mean Opinion he has, on all occasions, shewn to their Function, to admit of any Comparisons of so despicable a Person as I am with them; much more so to preferr me to the meanest

meanest of them. I wish with all my Heart I knew how to make them amends for the Dishonour and Injustice done them, tho' I am not conscious of having been any way the cause but only the Occasion of it. I am really ashamed of it, and ashamed of making more words concerning it.

I am sensible how much his pretended Partiality for me has prejudiced me in the Opinions of better Men than himself. If this were his design, I have already felt the effects of it, I see his Interest in it, to recommend his own false Reasonings from my Book, on the pretence of my Authority; and to intimate to those who are not pleased to consult my Book, and who are Ignorant of my obscure Character, that I Rivalled him in Libertys for unsettling the Belief of our Holy Christian Religion or our Sacred Canon. Himself knows me better than in earnest to believe this true, which notwithstanding by his Intimations, he seems so desirous that others should believe concerning me. This is a just Reason to believe that his Characters are as false as his Friendship. I have withall, besides this, other Evidences of his un sincere dealing with my self. But whilst he makes himself a Publick Enemy, undervaluing all things that ought to be valued by Good Men, I deprecate his Elogies, and shall think him a fairer Adversary in his false Reproaches than in his Insidious Commendations. But I rather wish for my own sake, as well as that of the Publick, that he would give over his Hostilities. For my part I should then value his Good Opinion
more,

more, when he values things truly and as they
deserve, and not as they serve his present Cor-
rupt Interest. God Almighty give him timely
Warning of what he may with more Sorrow be
Convinced on his Death-Bed, so prays

His and Your

most Hearty Well-wisher,

Henry Dodwell.

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